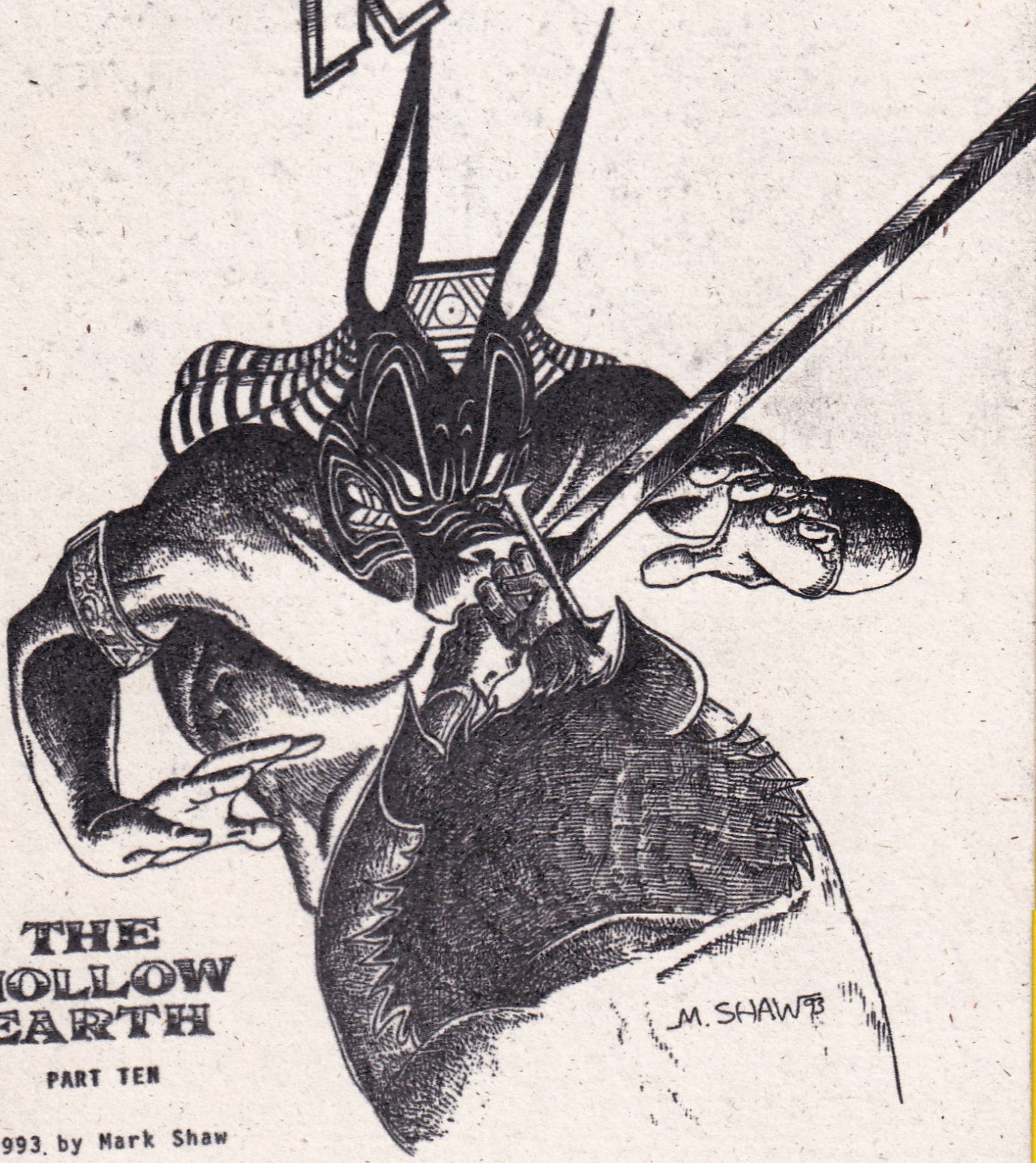
AWK! COMICS presents

WALTER KITTY

NO. 14
$2.95



THE HOLLOW EARTH

PART TEN

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IN MEMORIUM...

This is **WALTER KITTY** #14-- which is also part 10 of **THE HOLLOW EARTH,** featuring anthropomorphic, funny animal adventures at the center of the earth! The stage is set for the final chapters of Walter's underground adventure, which will wrap up in the next two issues! Glory Hallelujah!

This issue features Walter's second confrontation with the evil **Zanomanon**-- as he again attempts to rescue **Catherine** before her **soul** is stolen by Zanomanon's **absorbtion crystal!**

Will Walter succeed? Will he be killed? Will there be future issues of Walter Kitty? What stupid questions! Read this issue to find out the stupid answers!

This ish also contains the (gulp) death of one of our **major characters**--! Who will it be? Walter? Catherine? Dr. Foxx? Mariana? Zanomanon? Dennis? Prof. Scotty? (Remember Prof. Scotty?) Ah, well-- you'll have to thumb through this issue to find out...

I will make a promise, though...**whoever** dies in this issue will **really be dead**--! It won't be a trick or an imaginary story-- and they won't come back as a **clone**-- or as a newer, more **modern version** of themselves-- though I wouldn't rule out any seances or ghostly visitations in upcoming issues, if appropriate!

Heh, heh... so now, if your curiosity is aroused, let us buckle up tightly and grab a handful of Kleenex... things are getting kinda dark and morbid--!

Choke!

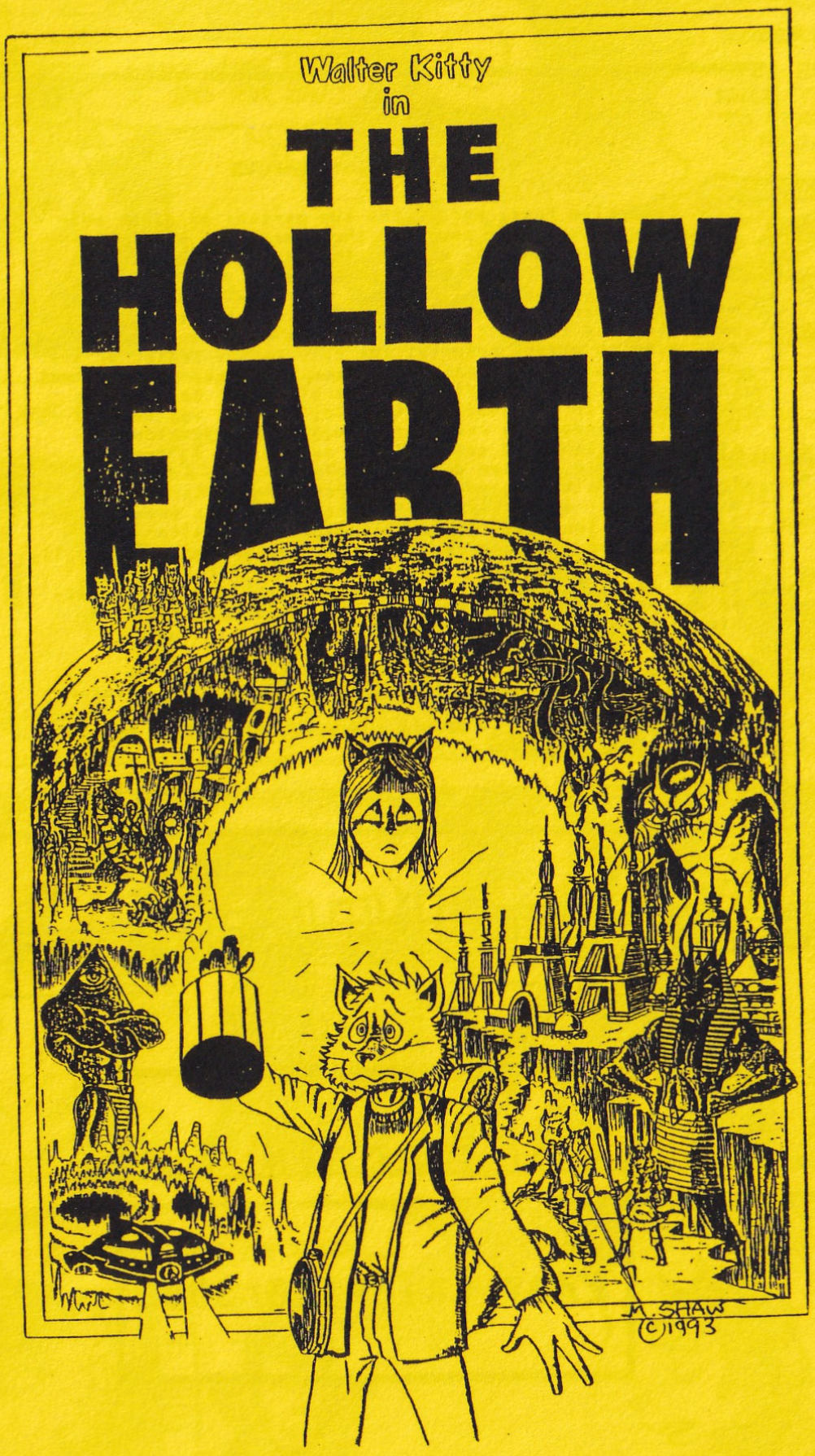
Your diabolical chum,

"UNCLE"
MARK

Mark Shaw

Walter Kitty
in

THE HOLLOW EARTH



WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

Catherine Foxx, one of the two persons on earth able to summon the immense power of the **Source,** is held prisoner by the evil **Zanomanon**-- who has forced her to summon the **evil side** of the Source to do his bidding.

Catherine's mother, **Mariana,** the only other person with the power to materialize the Source, is Zanomanon's only obstacle to world domination-- thus he sent the Source's **evil side** to attack **Agharta,** the city at the center of the earth, where both Catherine's mother, and father, **Dr. Robert Foxx**, were already fending off the attack of Zanomanon's **boot army**. In the ensuing struggle, Mariana was **injured**-- but still managed to reach her daughter **telepathically**-- causing the Source's evil side to **vanish**!

Meanwhile, **Walter** and his cyclopean, all-knowing friend **Dennis** have succeeded in restoring Walter to his **normal self,** after having been changed into a **beast** by Zanomanon's inherent **transmutation powers.** Walter will now be **immune** to Zanomanon's power--long enough to(hopefully) be able to **rescue Catherine** from Zanomanon's **fortress**-- before the villain has the chance to use his just-completed **absorption crystal** to **absorb her soul**, thus allowing him to gain **total mastery** of the Source!

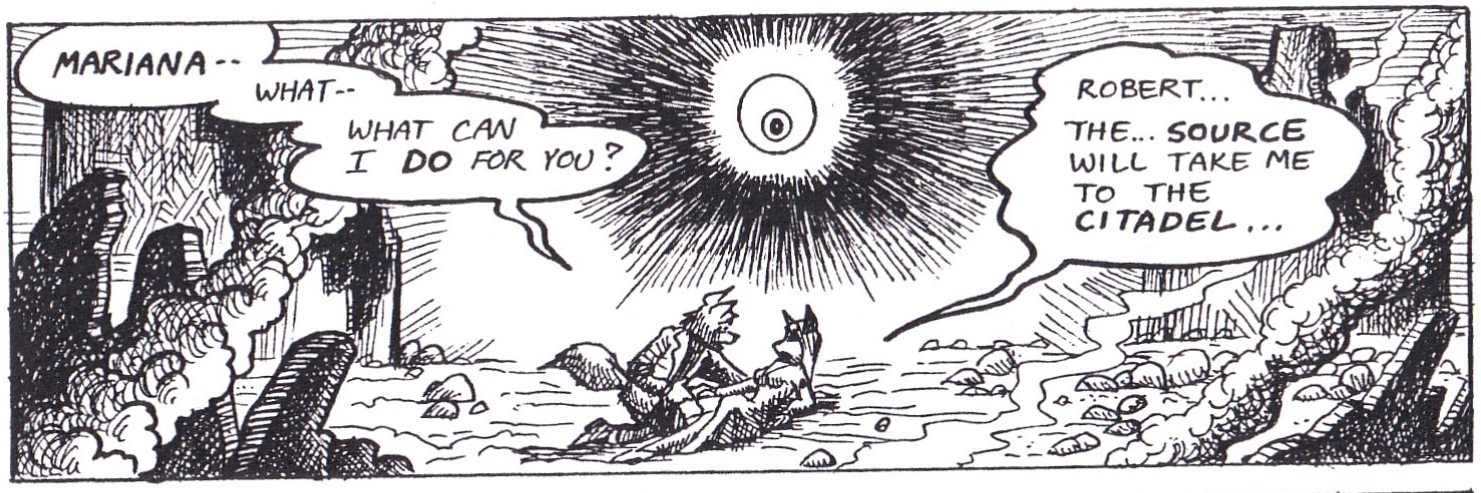
And so, as the curtains part and the lights dim, we find ourselves in war-torn **Agharta,** as Dr. Foxx comforts his injured wife...

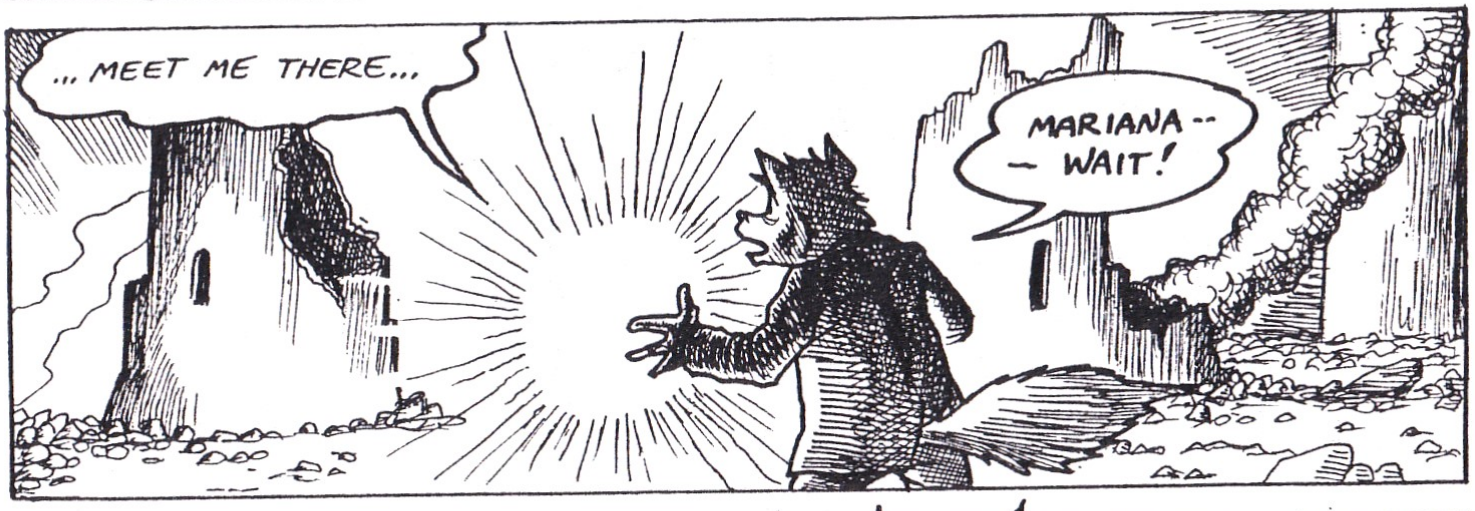
...and the music intones a sombre, dirge-like melody as our story continues...

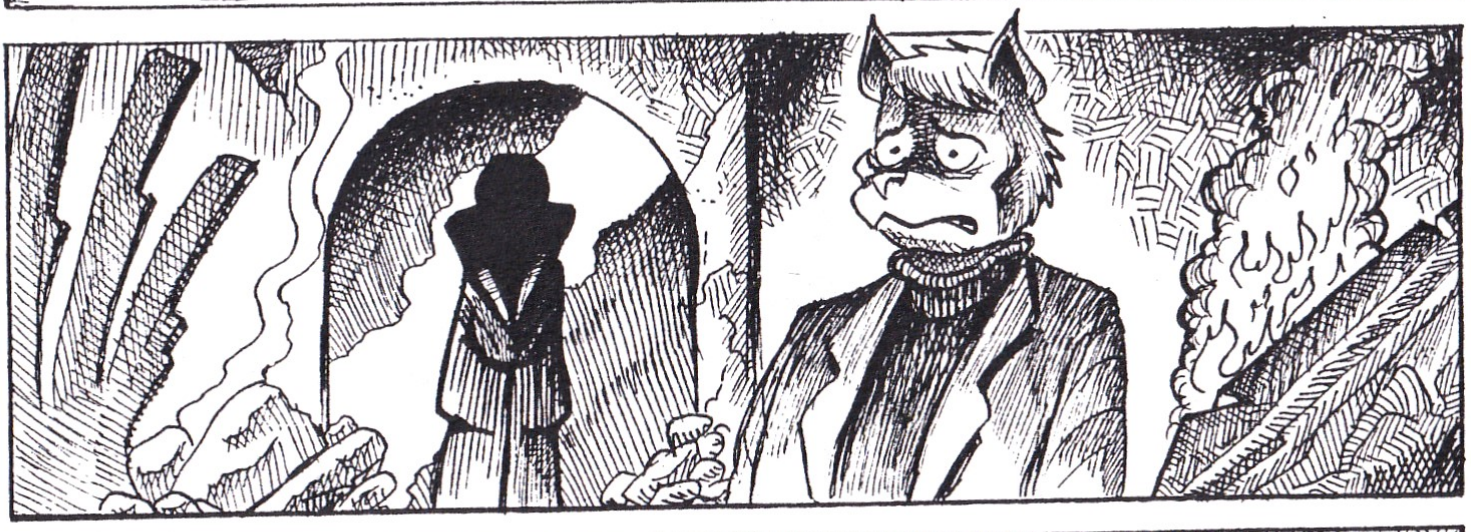
PART TEN:

LADY GRINNING SOUL

WALTER KITTY, Vol 1, No. 14, March 1993, published by AWK PROJECTS, 2701 Penny Lane, #219, Austin, Texas 78757. Published whenever we can. Copyright © 1993 by Mark Shaw. All rights reserved. Price: $2.95 per copy. Walter Kitty, the characters in this comic book and their distinct likenesses are the property of Mark Shaw, AKA "Uncle" Mark. No similarity between any of the characters, names, persons, or institutions with those of any living or dead persons or institutions is intended. Any similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. Come and listen to my story 'bout a man named Jed; he got fed up and shot Jethro in the head...


MARIANA--
WHAT--
WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?
ROBERT...
THE... SOURCE WILL TAKE ME TO THE CITADEL...

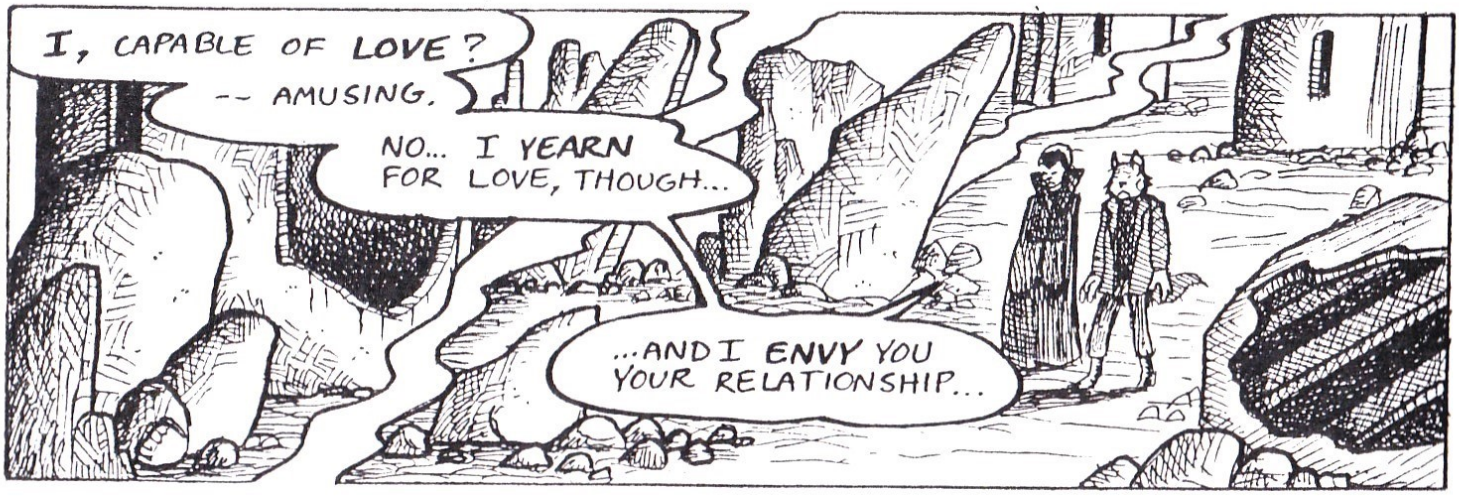

... MEET ME THERE...
MARIANA-- -- WAIT!

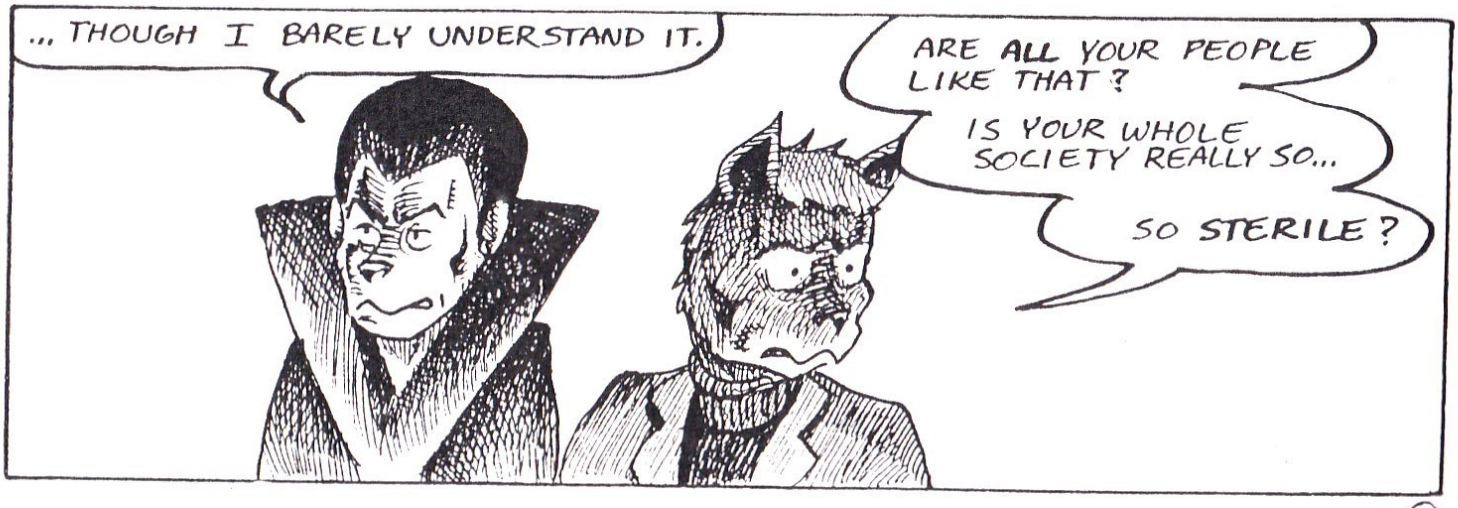


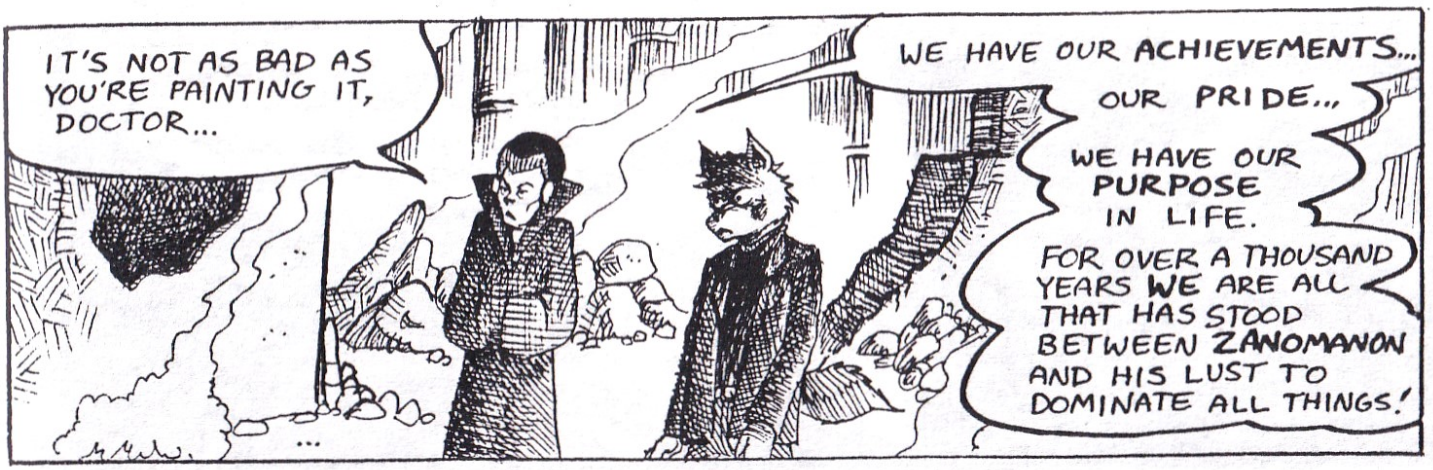
I ENVY YOU, DR. FOXX...
!

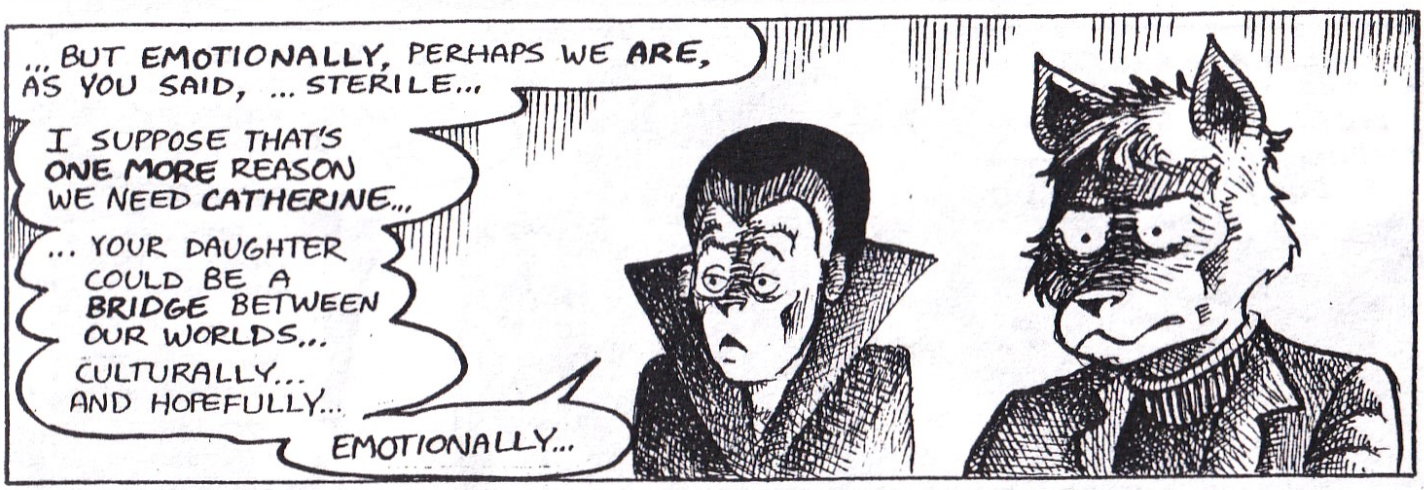
YOU ENVY ME --?
YES...
YOU HAVE A MYSTIC BOND WITH MARIANA...

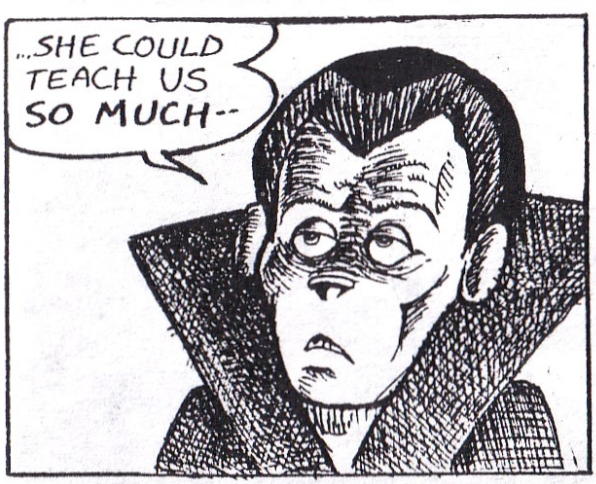
... SOMETHING I WOULD GIVE MY LIFE TO EXPERIENCE...
COME...
DO YOU... LOVE HER?

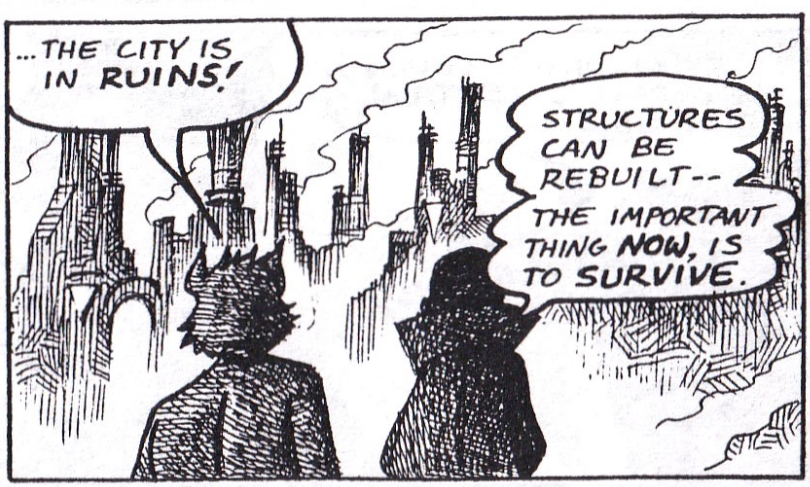

I, CAPABLE OF LOVE?
-- AMUSING.
NO... I YEARN FOR LOVE, THOUGH...
...AND I ENVY YOU YOUR RELATIONSHIP...

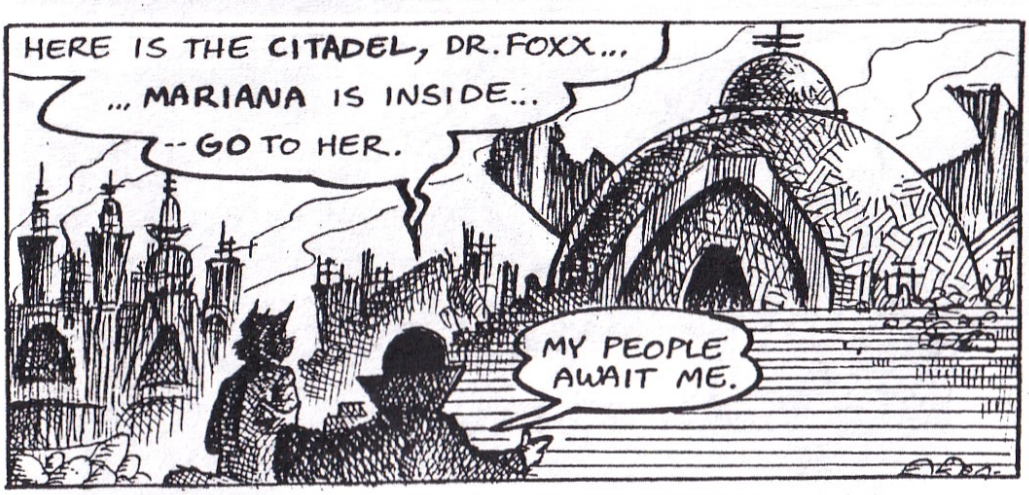

... THOUGH I BARELY UNDERSTAND IT.
ARE ALL YOUR PEOPLE LIKE THAT?
IS YOUR WHOLE SOCIETY REALLY SO...
SO STERILE?


IT'S NOT AS BAD AS YOU'RE PAINTING IT, DOCTOR...
WE HAVE OUR ACHIEVEMENTS...
OUR PRIDE...
WE HAVE OUR PURPOSE IN LIFE.
FOR OVER A THOUSAND YEARS WE ARE ALL THAT HAS STOOD BETWEEN ZANOMANON AND HIS LUST TO DOMINATE ALL THINGS!

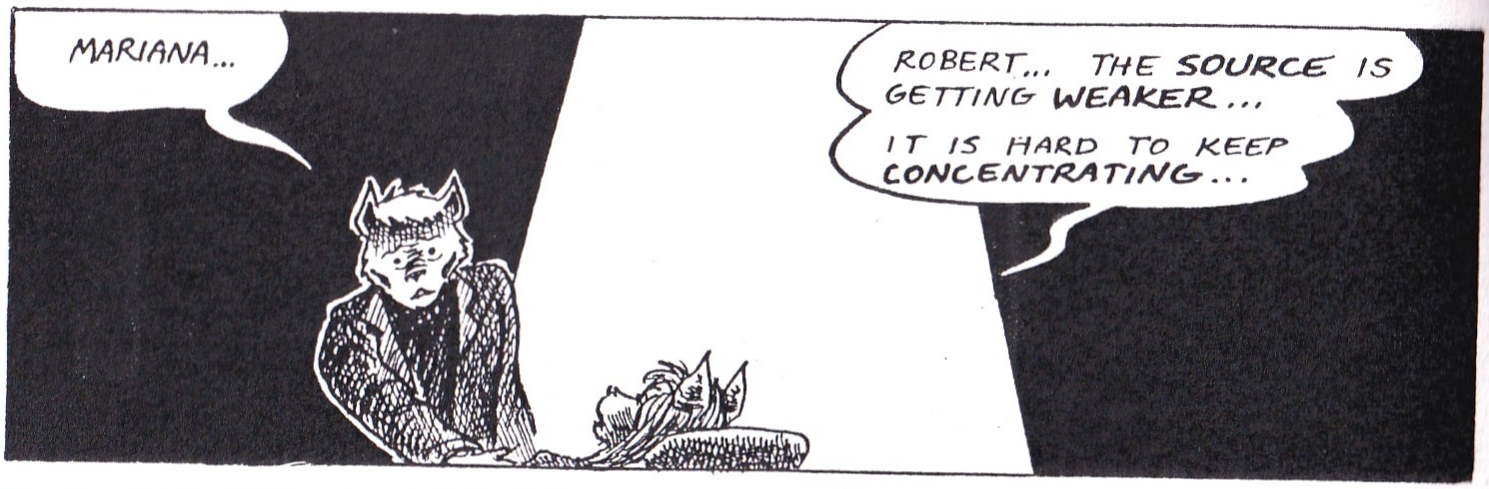

...BUT EMOTIONALLY, PERHAPS WE ARE, AS YOU SAID, ... STERILE...
I SUPPOSE THAT'S ONE MORE REASON WE NEED CATHERINE...
... YOUR DAUGHTER COULD BE A BRIDGE BETWEEN OUR WORLDS...
CULTURALLY... AND HOPEFULLY...
EMOTIONALLY...

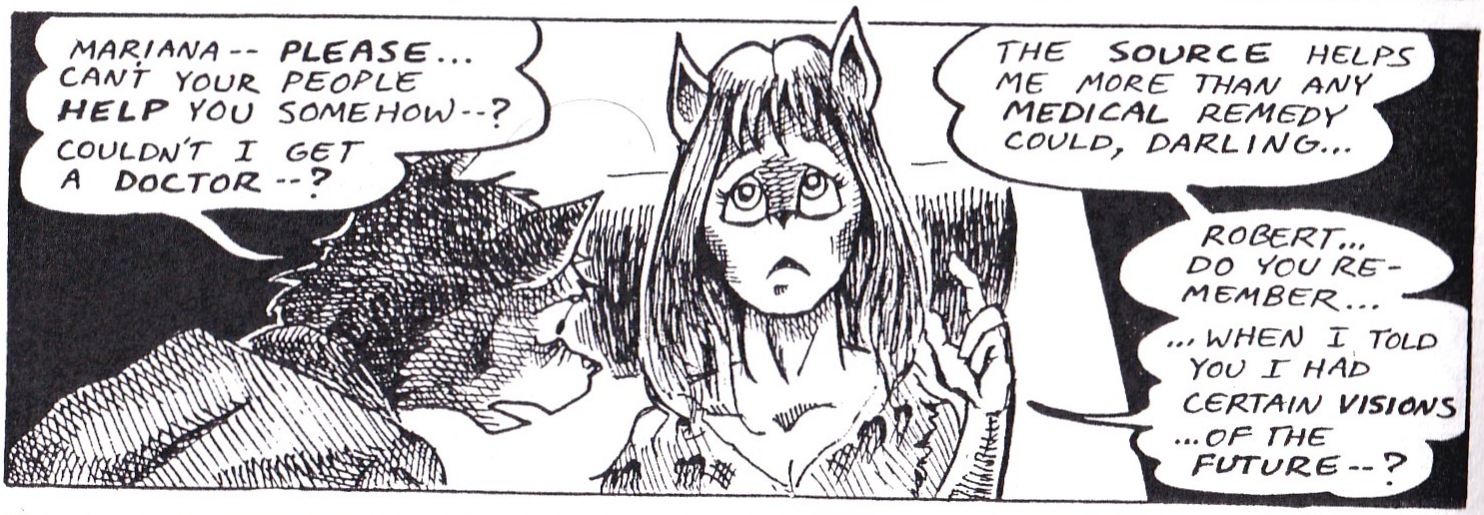

...SHE COULD TEACH US SO MUCH--

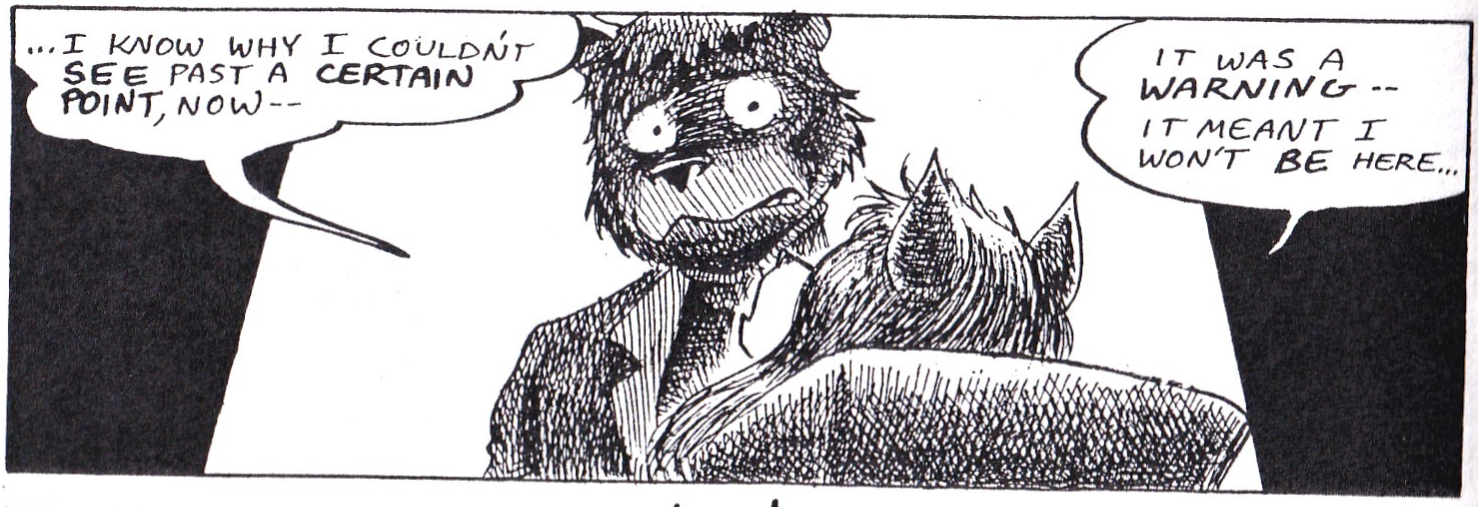

...THE CITY IS IN RUINS!
STRUCTURES CAN BE REBUILT--
THE IMPORTANT THING NOW, IS TO SURVIVE.

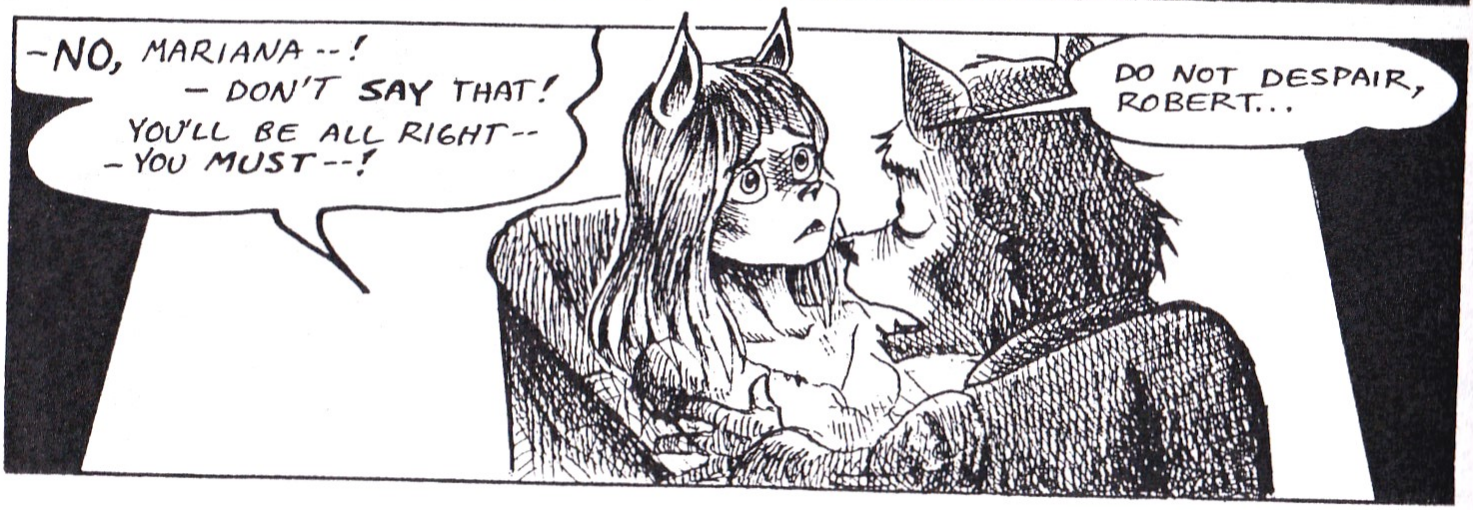

HERE IS THE CITADEL, DR. FOXX...
... MARIANA IS INSIDE...
--GO TO HER.
MY PEOPLE AWAIT ME.

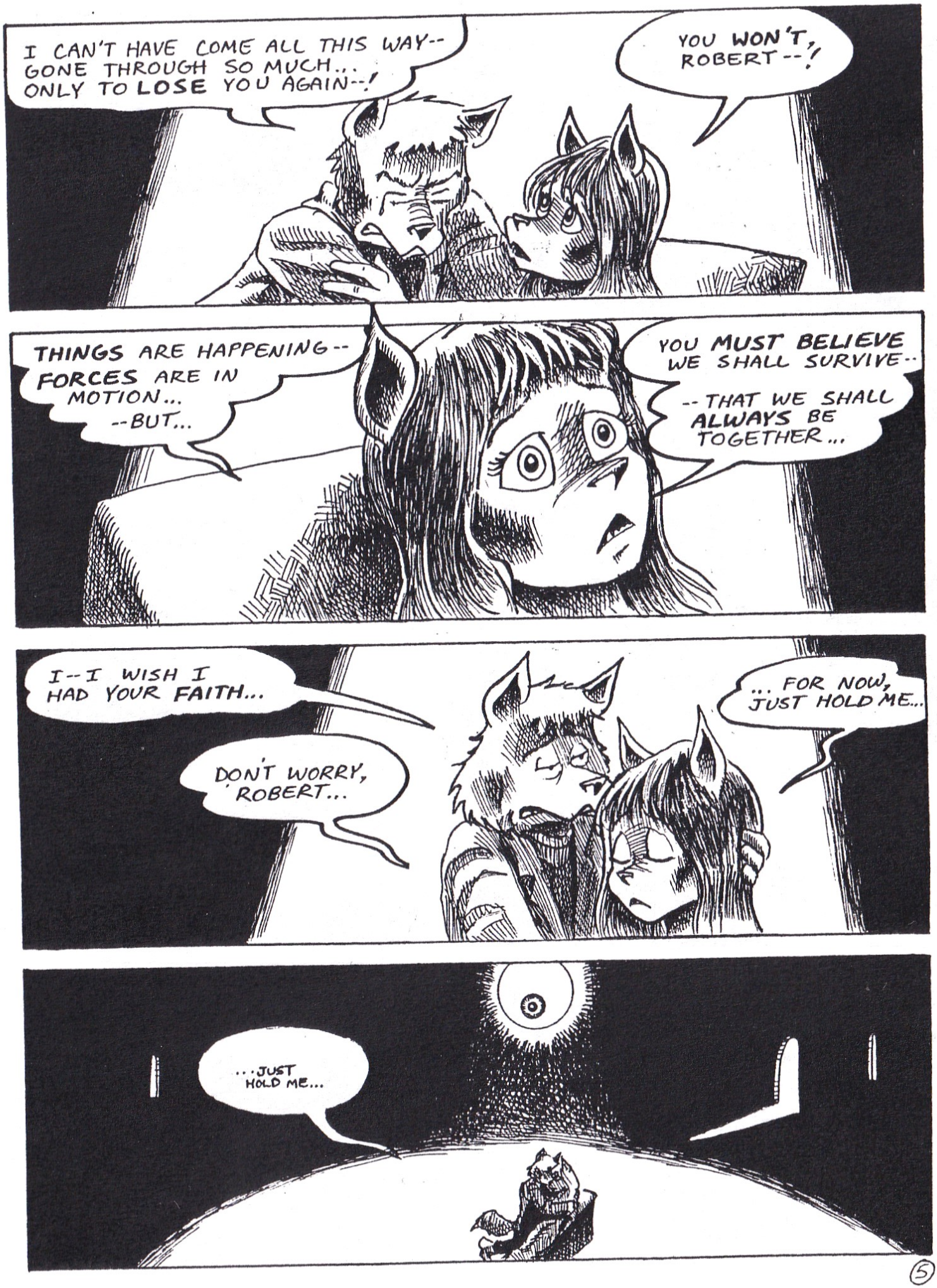
ROBERT...


MARIANA...
ROBERT... THE SOURCE IS GETTING WEAKER...
IT IS HARD TO KEEP CONCENTRATING...


MARIANA -- PLEASE... CAN'T YOUR PEOPLE HELP YOU SOMEHOW--? COULDN'T I GET A DOCTOR --?
THE SOURCE HELPS ME MORE THAN ANY MEDICAL REMEDY COULD, DARLING...
ROBERT... DO YOU RE-MEMBER...
...WHEN I TOLD YOU I HAD CERTAIN VISIONS ...OF THE FUTURE --?

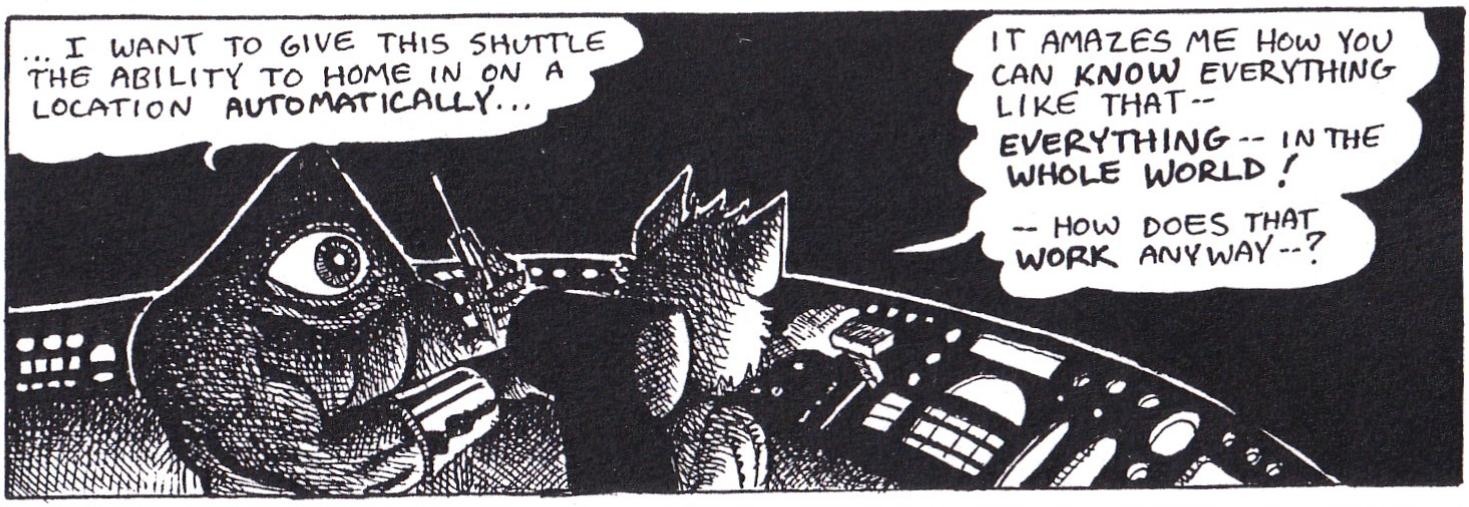

...I KNOW WHY I COULDN'T SEE PAST A CERTAIN POINT, NOW--
IT WAS A WARNING -- IT MEANT I WON'T BE HERE...

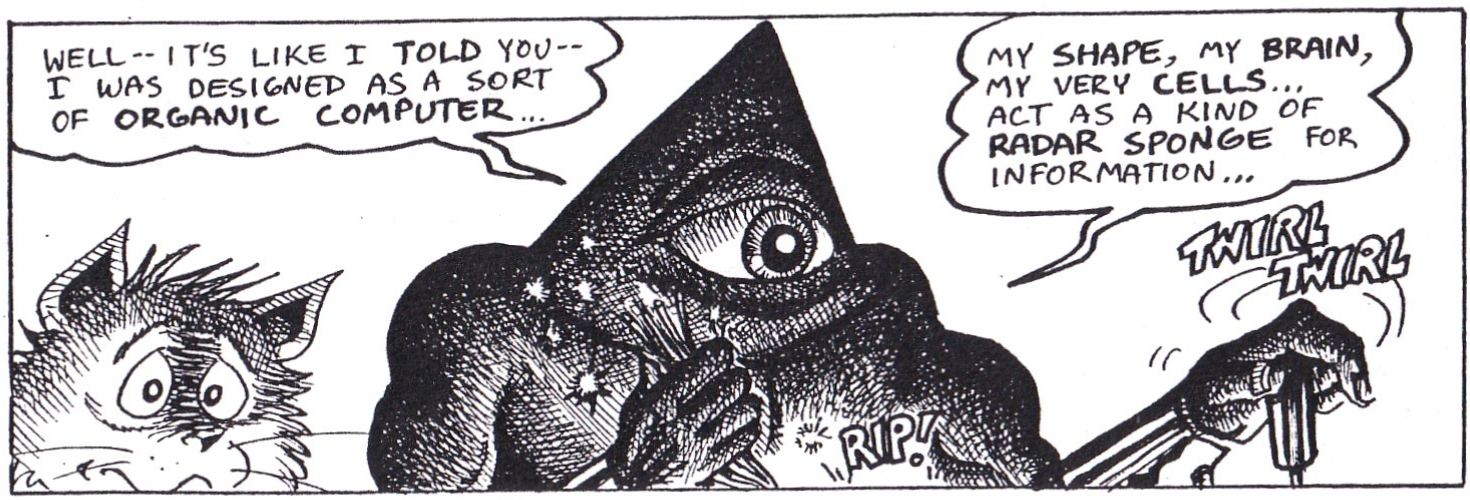

-NO, MARIANA --! - DON'T SAY THAT! YOU'LL BE ALL RIGHT-- - YOU MUST --!
DO NOT DESPAIR, ROBERT...

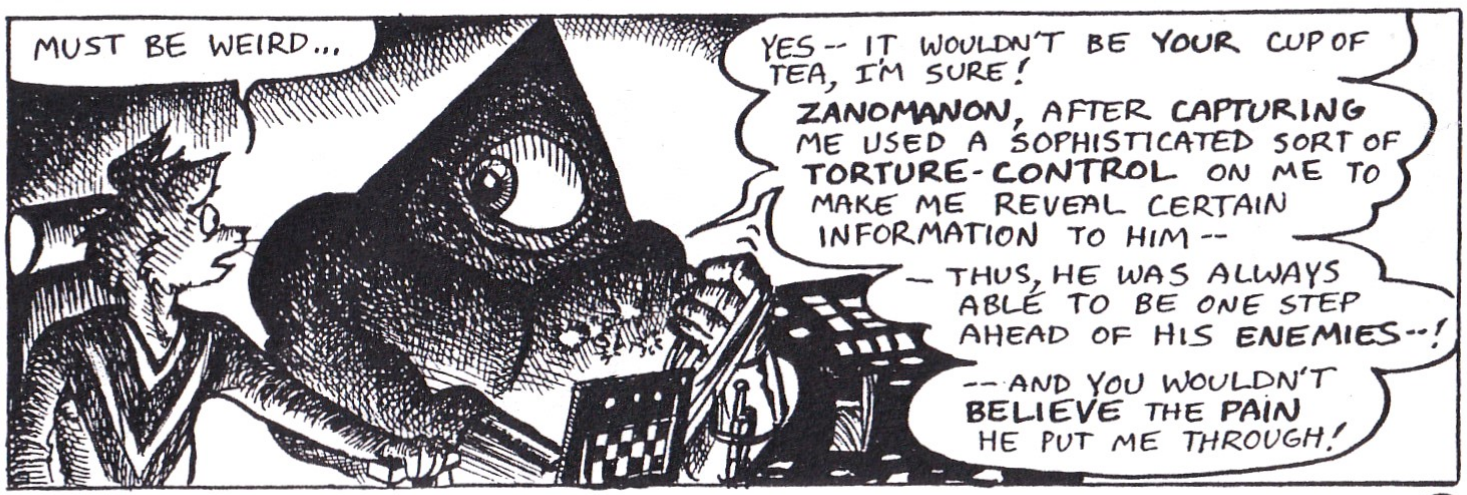

I CAN'T HAVE COME ALL THIS WAY-- GONE THROUGH SO MUCH... ONLY TO LOSE YOU AGAIN--!
YOU WON'T, ROBERT--!
THINGS ARE HAPPENING-- FORCES ARE IN MOTION... --BUT...
YOU MUST BELIEVE WE SHALL SURVIVE--
--THAT WE SHALL ALWAYS BE TOGETHER...
I--I WISH I HAD YOUR FAITH...
DON'T WORRY, ROBERT...
... FOR NOW, JUST HOLD ME...
...JUST HOLD ME...

MEANWHILE
ARE THESE THE ONLY CLOTHES YOU COULD DIG UP, DENNIS?
THEY MAKE ME FEEL LIKE A TOTAL DORK!
YOU'RE LUCKY WE HAD THOSE IN THE SHIP ALREADY, WALTER! --IT WAS FORTUNATE FOR US THAT ONE OF ZANOMANON'S UNDER-COVER SPIES HAD ONE OF HIS AGHARTAN OUTFITS STASHED IN HERE IN PREPARATION FOR AN UPCOMING MISSION--!
I'M SORRY YOU DON'T LIKE THE LATEST IN AGHARTAN FASHION, WALTER--! -BUT ANYWAY, IT'S EITHER THIS OR YOU CAN RUN AROUND NAKED UNTIL YOU FIND SOMETHING YOU LIKE--! BUT REALLY, THAT'S NOT IMPORTANT RIGHT NOW--
WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS TO SAVE CATHERINE BEFORE ZANOMANON USES HIS ABSORPTION CRYSTAL ON HER!
I KNOW, I KNOW--!
WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW, DENNIS?
--ZANOMANON IS JUST NOW BEING INFORMED THAT THE ABSORPTION CRYSTAL IS READY TO BE USED--!

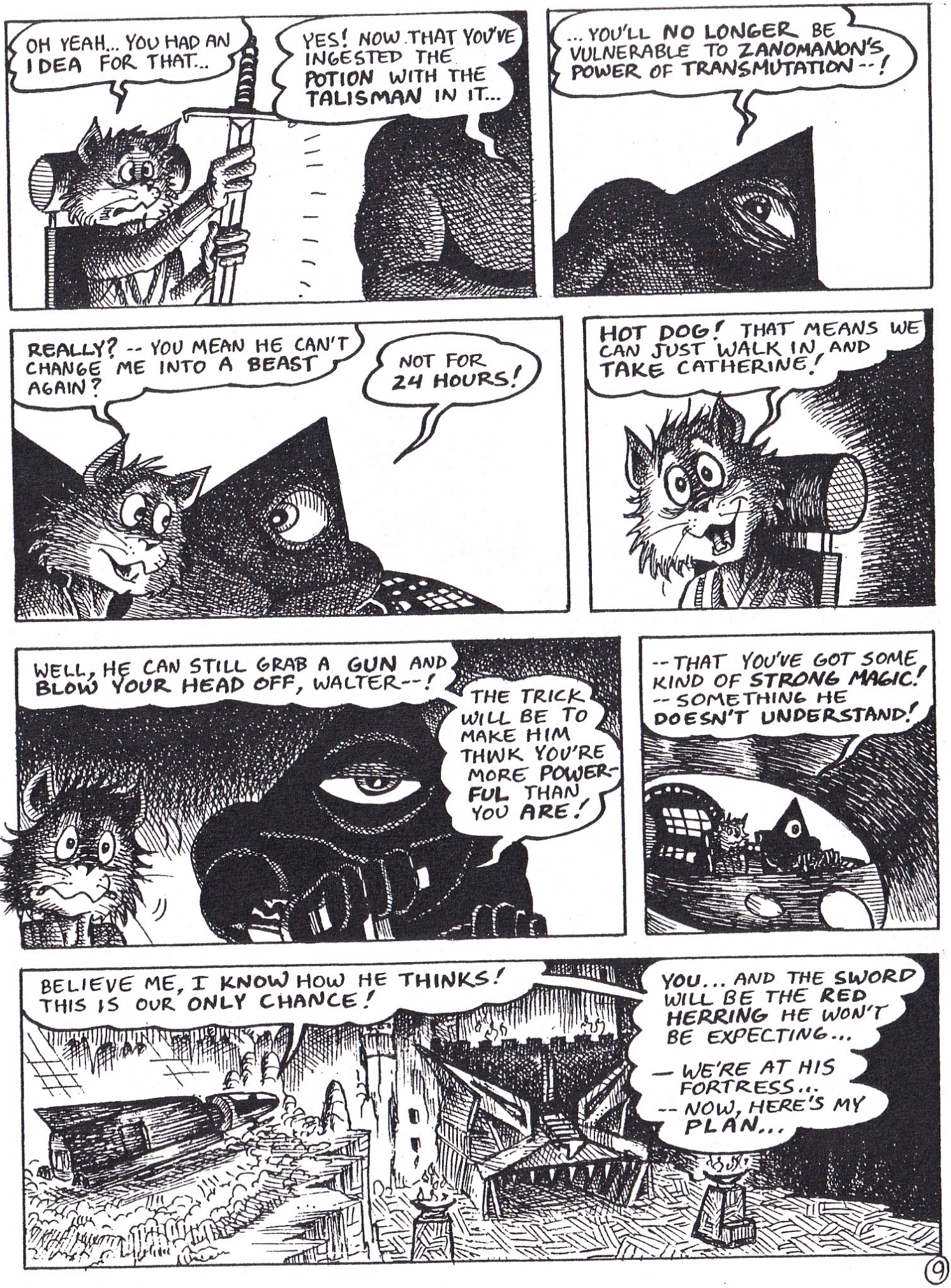
HE'LL NOT WASTE MUCH TIME, I'M SURE, IN EXPLOITING IT!
HURRY! HURRY!!
MM-HMM. HERE, WALTER-- SIT DOWN HERE AND HOLD THIS LEVER FORWARD ALL THE WAY, O.K.?
-- I WANT TO MAKE A SLIGHT MODIFICATION IN THE SHIPS CONTROLS...

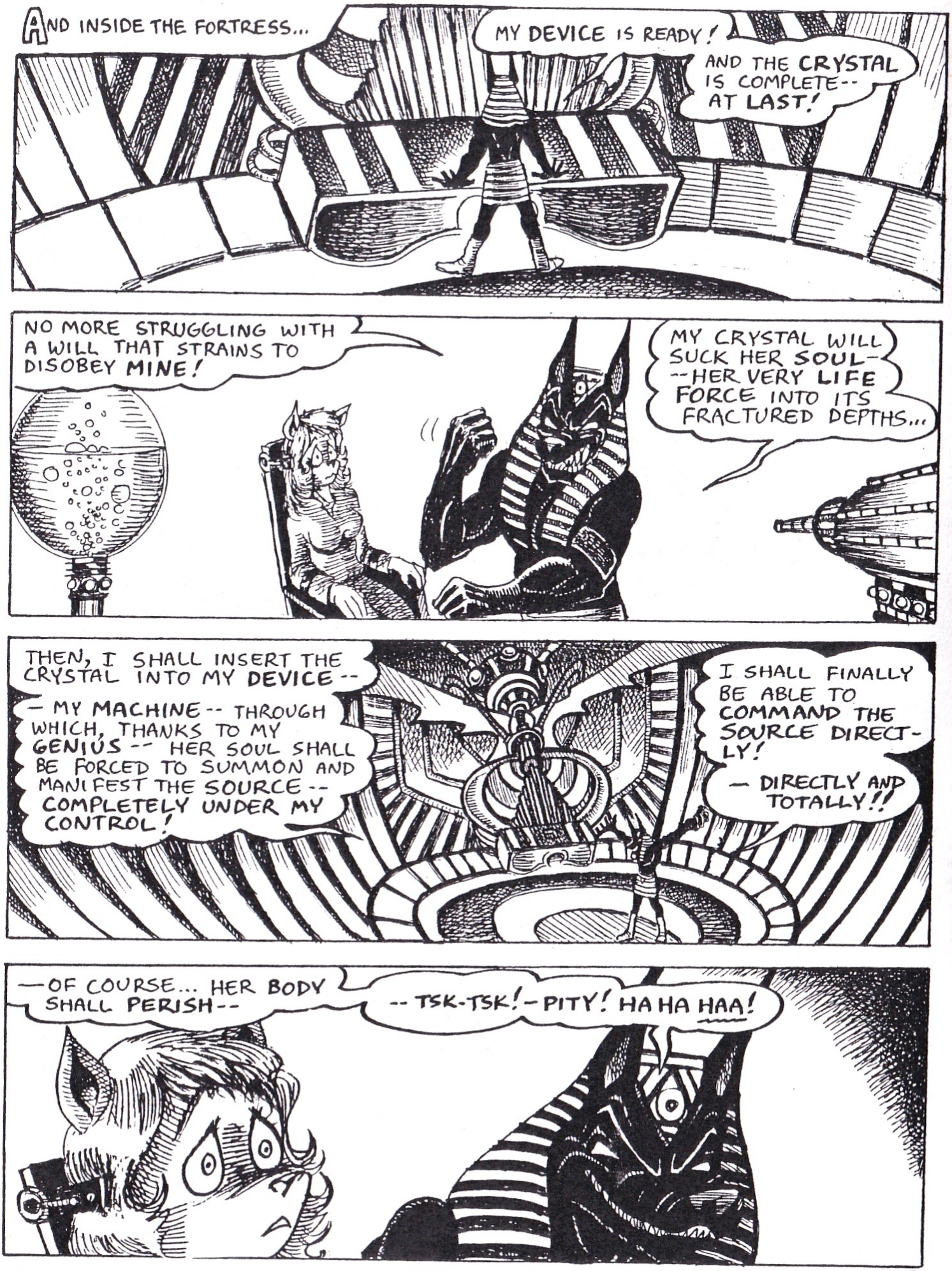

... I WANT TO GIVE THIS SHUTTLE THE ABILITY TO HOME IN ON A LOCATION AUTOMATICALLY...
IT AMAZES ME HOW YOU CAN KNOW EVERYTHING LIKE THAT-- EVERYTHING -- IN THE WHOLE WORLD!
-- HOW DOES THAT WORK ANYWAY--?


WELL-- IT'S LIKE I TOLD YOU-- I WAS DESIGNED AS A SORT OF ORGANIC COMPUTER...
MY SHAPE, MY BRAIN, MY VERY CELLS... ACT AS A KIND OF RADAR SPONGE FOR INFORMATION...
TWIRL TWIRL
RIP!


MUST BE WEIRD...
YES-- IT WOULDN'T BE YOUR CUP OF TEA, I'M SURE!
ZANOMANON, AFTER CAPTURING ME USED A SOPHISTICATED SORT OF TORTURE-CONTROL ON ME TO MAKE ME REVEAL CERTAIN INFORMATION TO HIM--
-- THUS, HE WAS ALWAYS ABLE TO BE ONE STEP AHEAD OF HIS ENEMIES--!
-- AND YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE THE PAIN HE PUT ME THROUGH!

I GUESS THAT WE'RE LUCKY IT TOOK ZANOMANON SO LONG TO COMPLETE HIS CRYSTAL...
WELL, WE'RE LUCKY THAT ZANOMANON REFUSES TO PERSONALLY WORK ON SUCH DEVICES-- WHEN HIS BOOT SLAVES WILL DO IT FOR HIM-!
--HE GLORIES IN HAVING UNDERLINGS TO DO ANY TECHNICAL OR MENIAL LABOR FOR HIM--
-- HE CONSIDERS HIMSELF TOO IMPORTANT TO SULLY HIS HANDS WITH SUCH THINGS--
--A CONCEIT WE MUST HURRY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF...
... FOR IF ZANOMANON USES THE CRYSTAL TO ABSORB CATHERINE'S SOUL-- HER PHYSICAL LIFE WILL... END--
-- AND HER SOUL WILL BE ENSLAVED FOR-EVER...
FORCED TO BEND THE SOURCE TO HIS WILL--
--AND DARKNESS WILL ENVELOP THE EARTH FOR ALL TIME--!
WELL, WE'VE JUST GOT TO GET CATHERINE OUT OF THERE-- THAT'S ALL!
-BUT YOU STILL HAVEN'T TOLD ME HOW WE'RE GOING TO DO IT!
ZIP!
—I'M GLAD YOU ASKED-! NOW, ABOUT THIS SWORD, WALTER...


OH YEAH... YOU HAD AN IDEA FOR THAT...
YES! NOW THAT YOU'VE INGESTED THE POTION WITH THE TALISMAN IN IT...
... YOU'LL NO LONGER BE VULNERABLE TO ZANOMANON'S POWER OF TRANSMUTATION --!
REALLY? -- YOU MEAN HE CAN'T CHANGE ME INTO A BEAST AGAIN?
NOT FOR 24 HOURS!
HOT DOG! THAT MEANS WE CAN JUST WALK IN AND TAKE CATHERINE!
WELL, HE CAN STILL GRAB A GUN AND BLOW YOUR HEAD OFF, WALTER--!
THE TRICK WILL BE TO MAKE HIM THWK YOU'RE MORE POWERFUL THAN YOU ARE!
--THAT YOU'VE GOT SOME KIND OF STRONG MAGIC! --SOMETHING HE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND!
BELIEVE ME, I KNOW HOW HE THINKS! THIS IS OUR ONLY CHANCE!
YOU... AND THE SWORD WILL BE THE RED HERRING HE WON'T BE EXPECTING...
— WE'RE AT HIS FORTRESS...
-- NOW, HERE'S MY PLAN...


AND INSIDE THE FORTRESS...
MY DEVICE IS READY!
AND THE CRYSTAL IS COMPLETE-- AT LAST!
NO MORE STRUGGLING WITH A WILL THAT STRAINS TO DISOBEY MINE!
MY CRYSTAL WILL SUCK HER SOUL-- --HER VERY LIFE FORCE INTO ITS FRACTURED DEPTHS...
THEN, I SHALL INSERT THE CRYSTAL INTO MY DEVICE--
-- MY MACHINE -- THROUGH WHICH, THANKS TO MY GENIUS -- HER SOUL SHALL BE FORCED TO SUMMON AND MANIFEST THE SOURCE -- COMPLETELY UNDER MY CONTROL!
I SHALL FINALLY BE ABLE TO COMMAND THE SOURCE DIRECTLY!
-- DIRECTLY AND TOTALLY!!
--OF COURSE... HER BODY SHALL PERISH--
-- TSK-TSK! -- PITY! HA HA HAA!

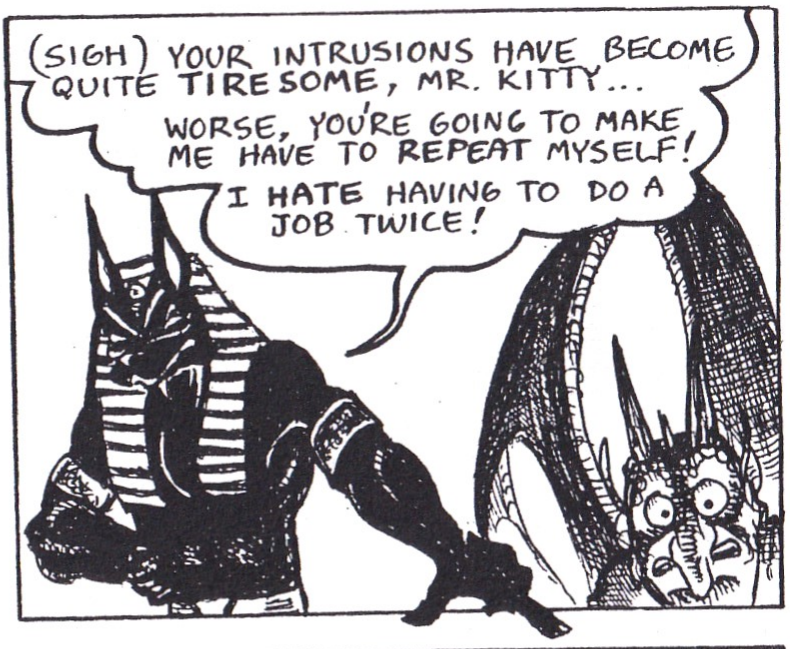
AH, WELL -- ENOUGH PROCRASTINATION -- PREPARE THE CRYSTAL, MAGGOT!
ALL IS READY, SIRE --! ALL THAT REMAINS IS TO BRING IT FROM THE LABORATORY...
THEN -- FETCH IT HERE, FOOL!
YES, SIRE!
AT LAST -- AT LONG LAST -- MY POWER WILL BE SUPREME!
-- AND THE WORLD WILL SOON BE MY PLAYTHING!
-- BRING IN THE ABSORPTION CRYSTAL!
HOLD IT RIGHT THERE -- -- EVIL SCUMSUCKING PIG!!
-- NO OFFENSE TO ANY OF MY SWINE FRIENDS --!

WHAT?! IT CAN'T BE-- NOT--
-- SAY IT, CREEP!

—MY NAME'S KITTY--
WALTER KITTY!!
SNORT!
HISS!
GNASH!
ARGH!

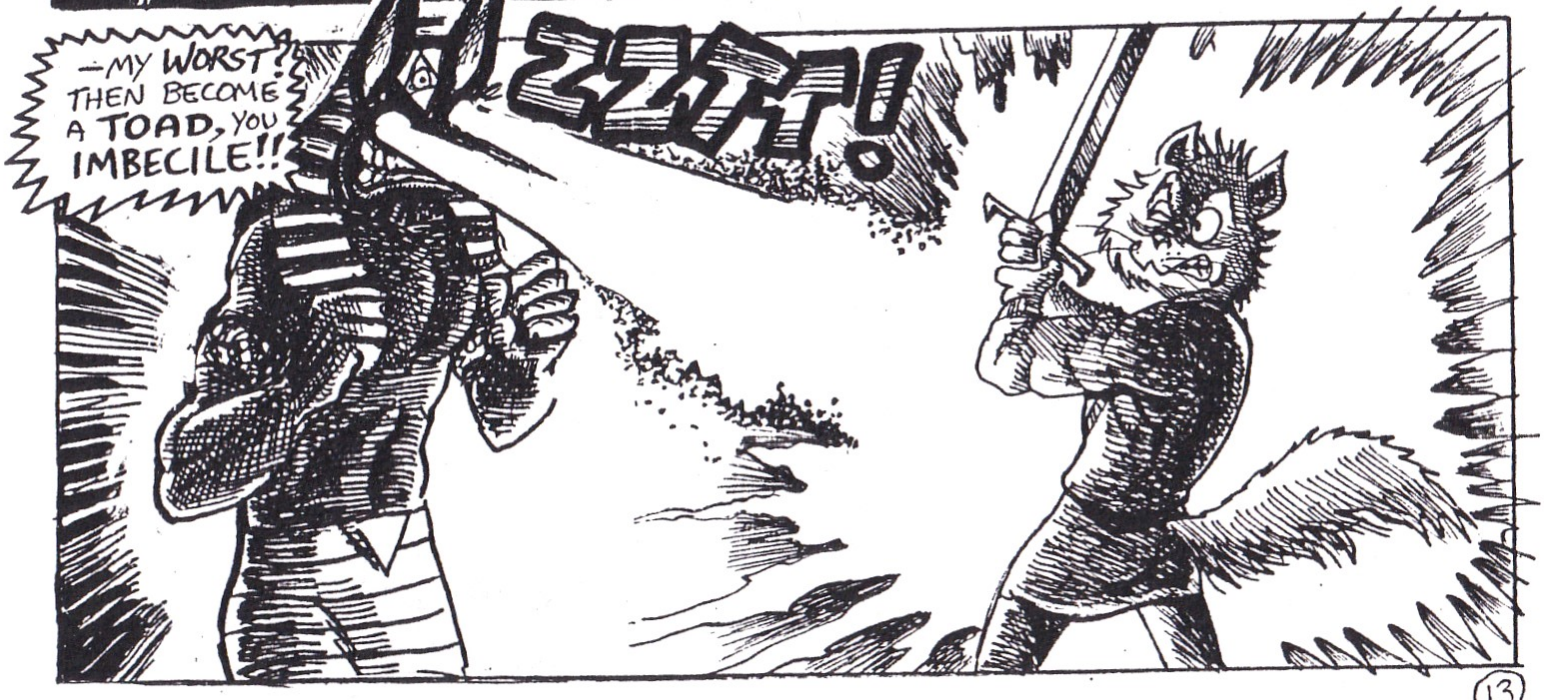
-- BUT I THOUGHT--?! HOW DID YOU--? NO! IT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
NO ONE HAS EVER BEEN ABLE TO CHANGE BACK ONCE I'VE TRANSFORMED THEM--!

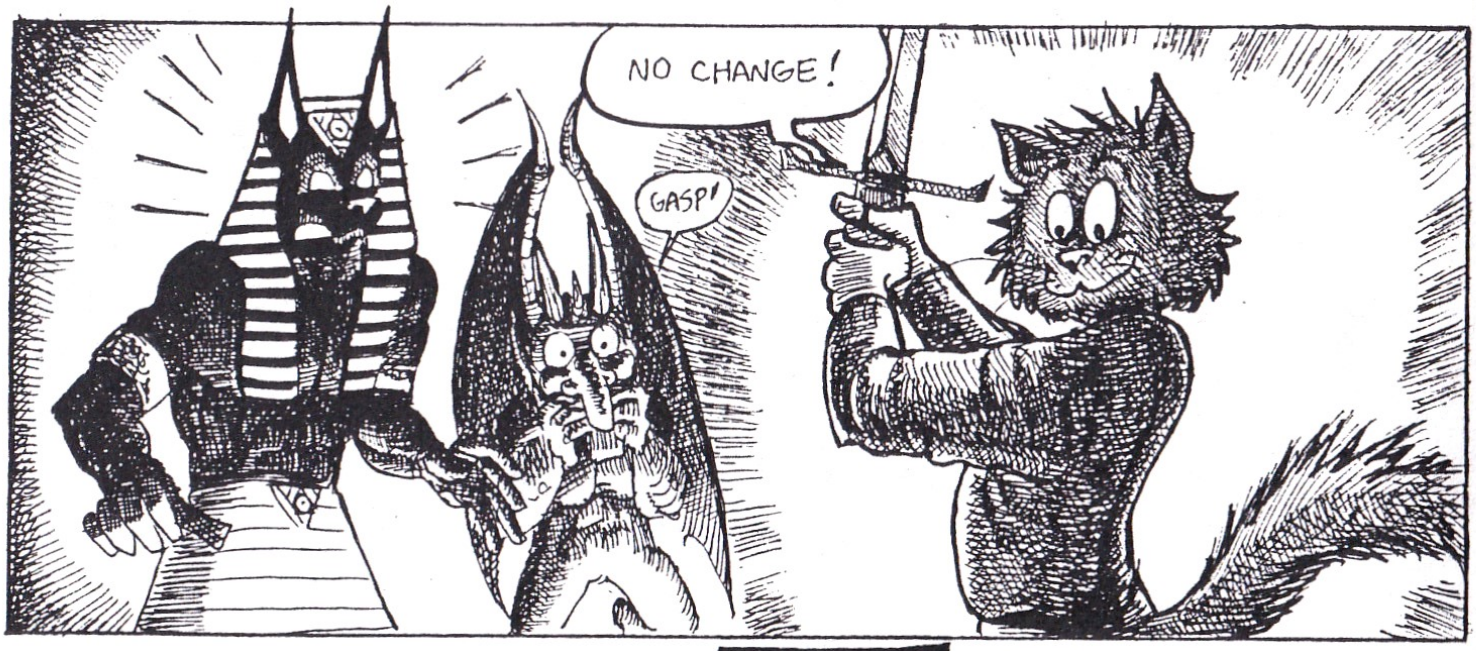
-- WELL, THERE'S ALWAYS A FIRST TIME ISN'T THERE--?
-- MAYBE YOUR POWER ISN'T AS STRONG AS MINE--
-- YOU POMPOUS JERK!

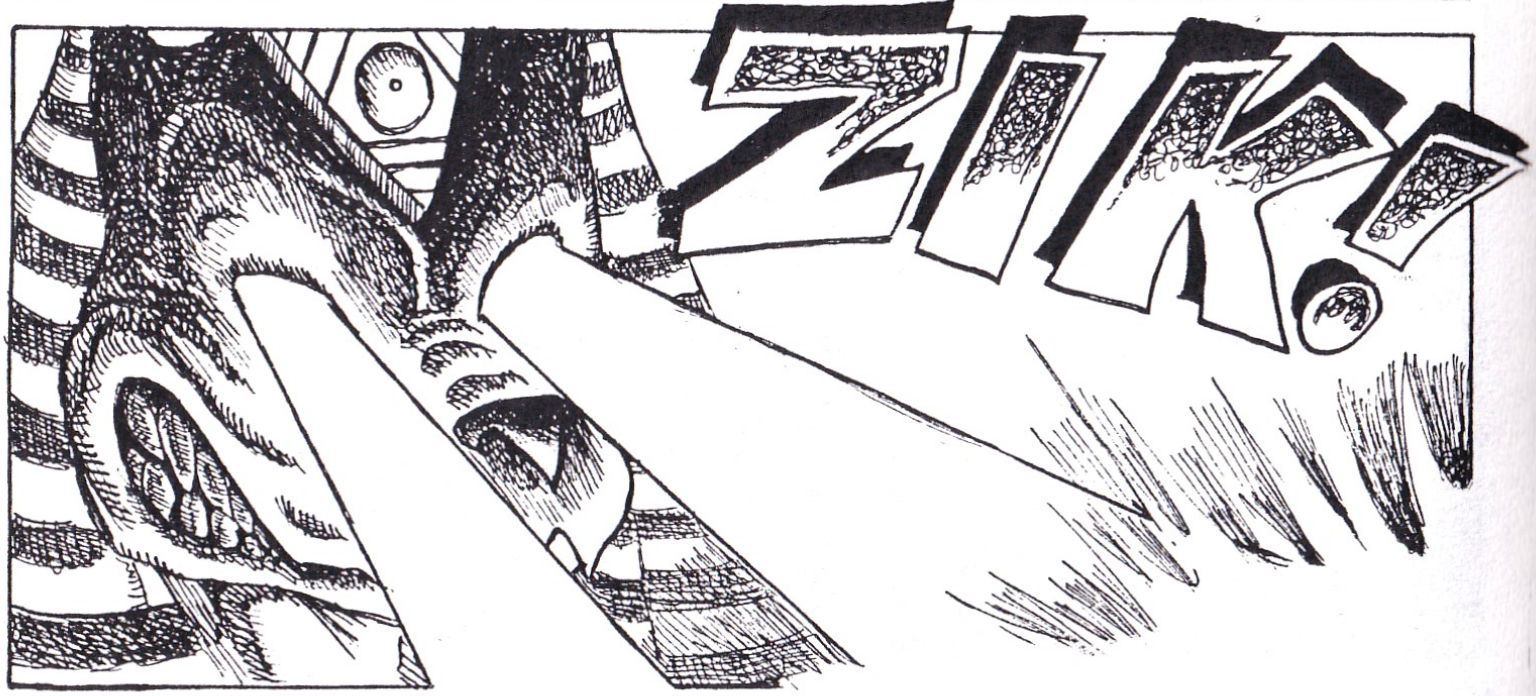

(SIGH) YOUR INTRUSIONS HAVE BECOME QUITE TIRESOME, MR. KITTY...
WORSE, YOU'RE GOING TO MAKE ME HAVE TO REPEAT MYSELF!
I HATE HAVING TO DO A JOB TWICE!

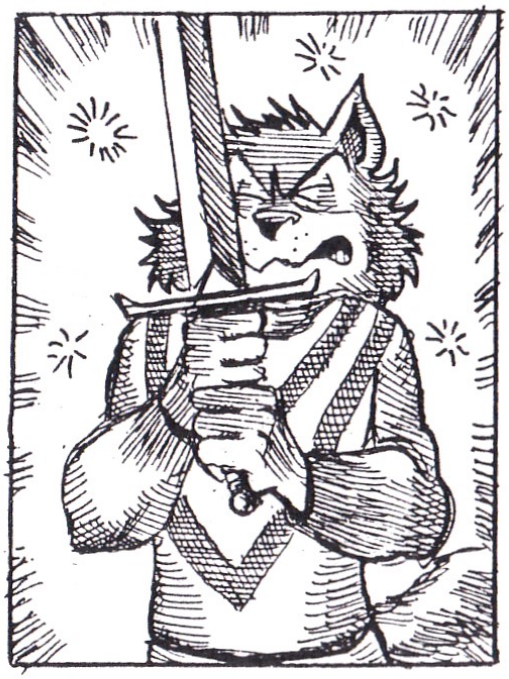
HOWEVER-- I SHANT BE QUITE AS LENIENT WITH YOU THIS TIME!
MY PATIENCE HAS WORN THIN!

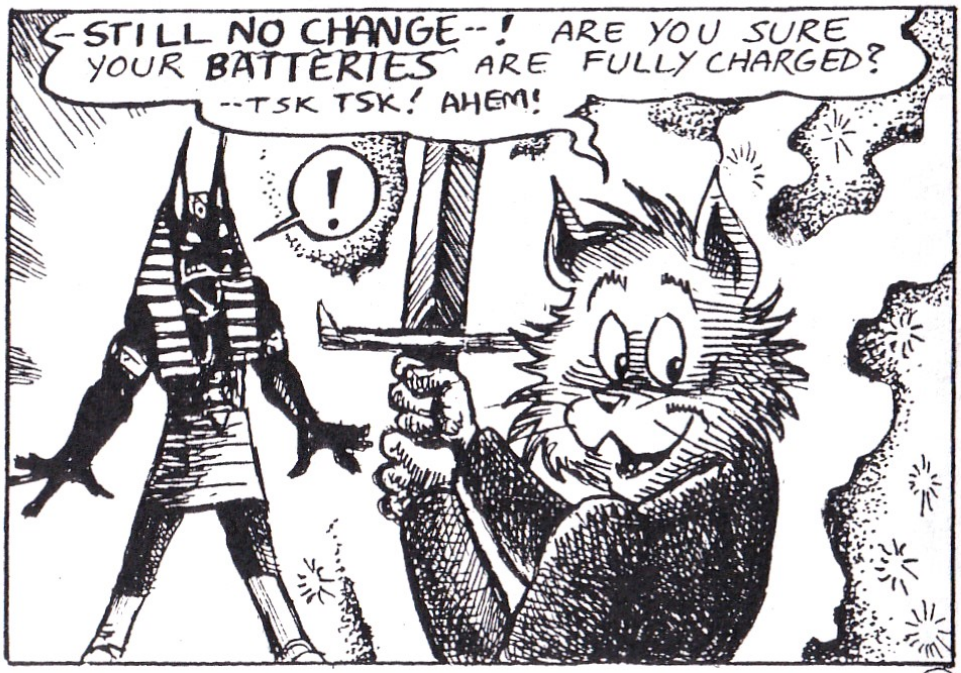
DO YOUR WORST, SLIME!

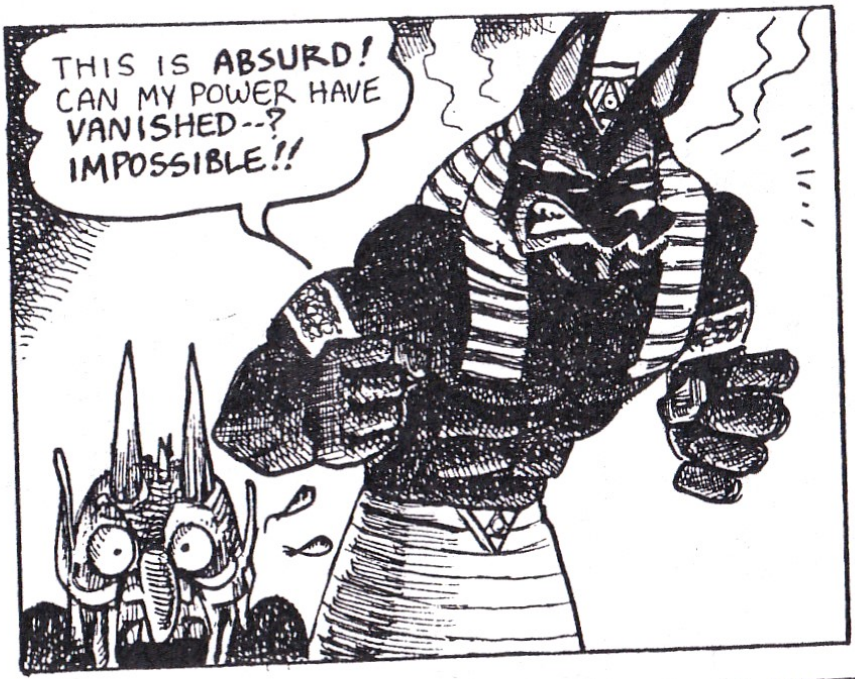

—MY WORST! THEN BECOME A TOAD, YOU IMBECILE!!
ZZZAP!


NO CHANGE!
GASP!

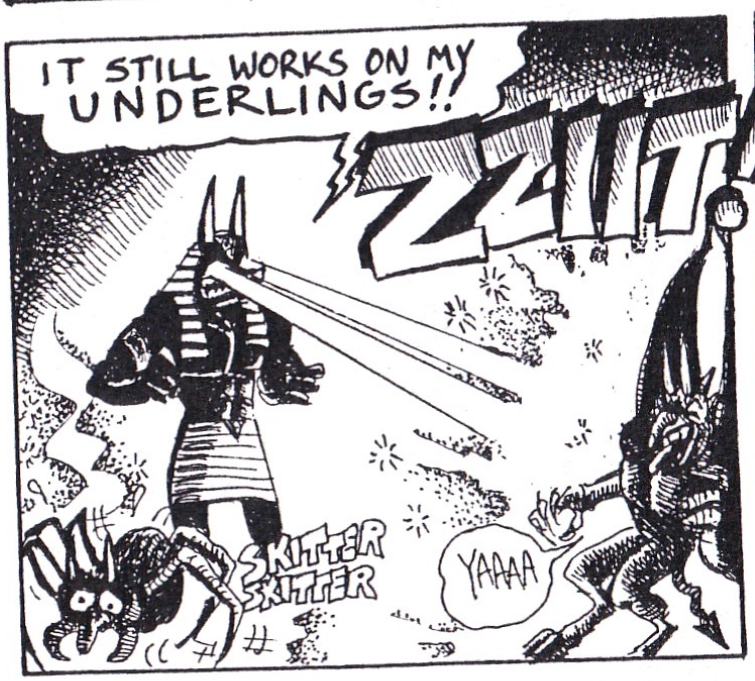

ZIK!




--STILL NO CHANGE--! ARE YOU SURE YOUR BATTERIES ARE FULLY CHARGED? --TSK TSK! AHEM!
!

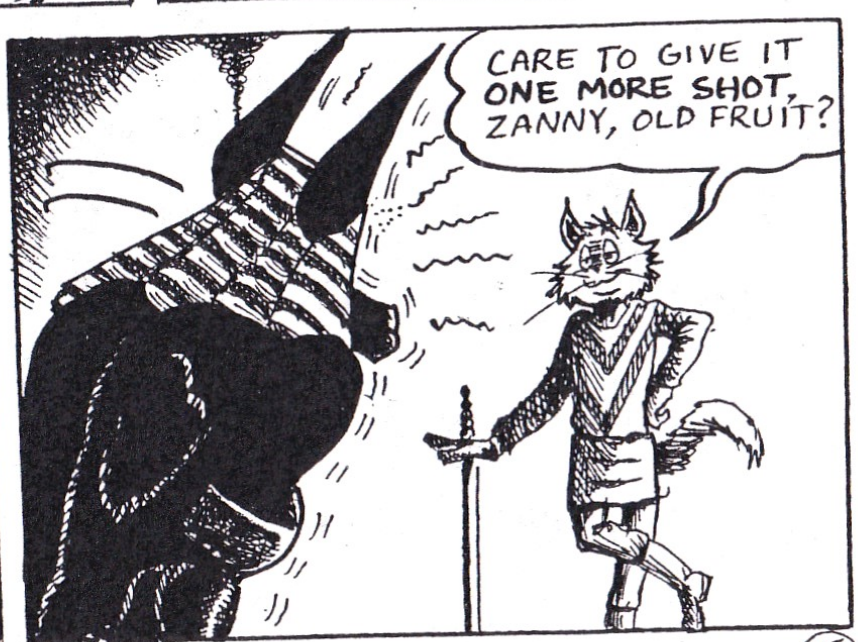

THIS IS ABSURD! CAN MY POWER HAVE VANISHED--? IMPOSSIBLE!!

ZZAK!
EEEK!

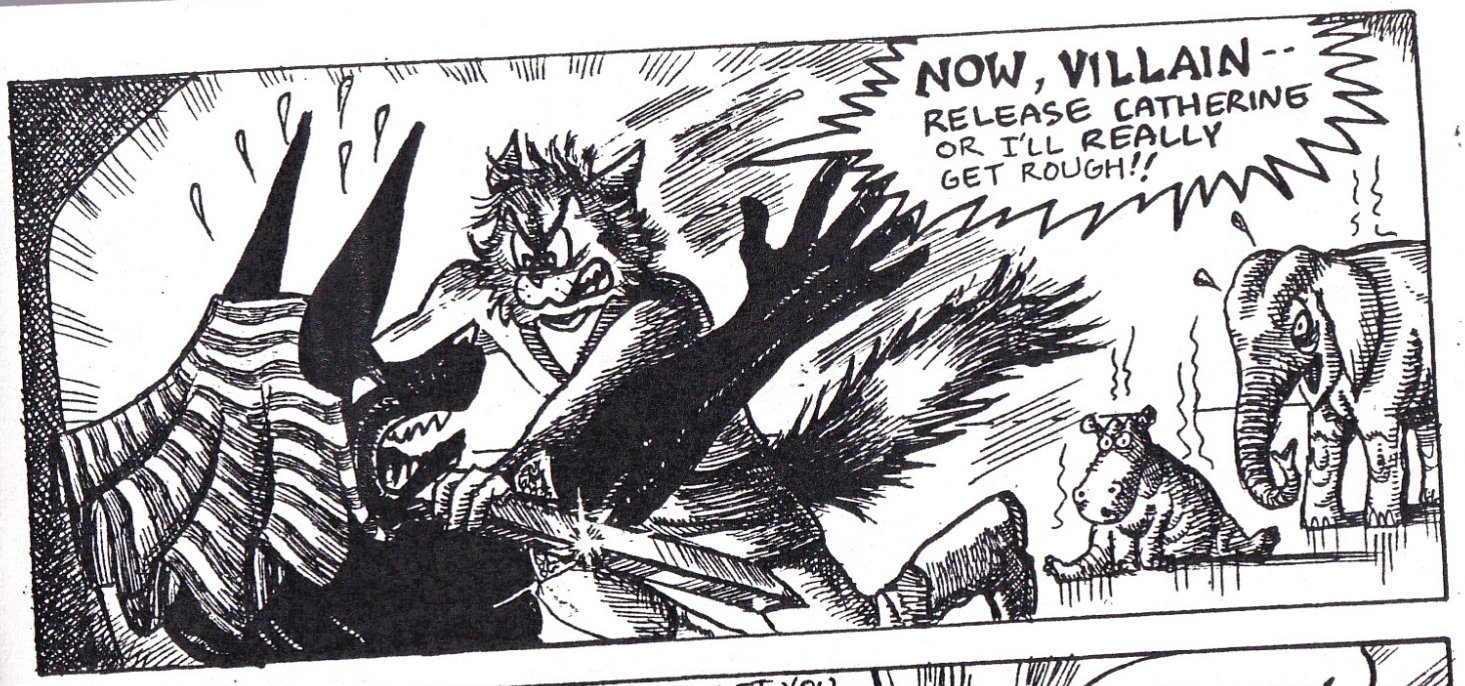

IT STILL WORKS ON MY UNDERLINGS!!
ZZAT!
SKITTER SKITTER
YAAAA

IT WORKS ON EVERYONE!!
ZZIP
ZZIT
ZZOK

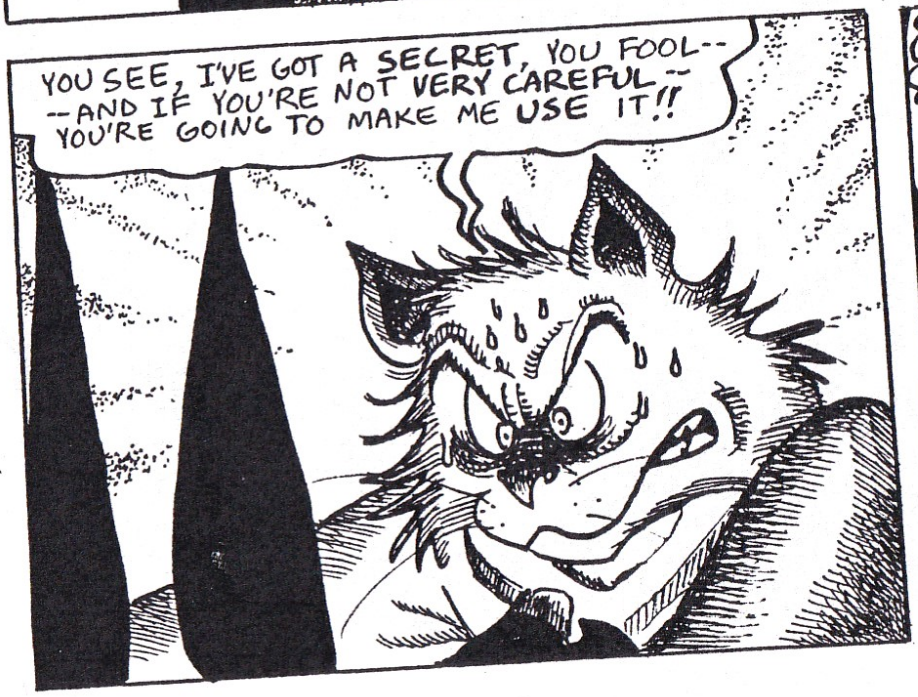
...EVERYONE...?

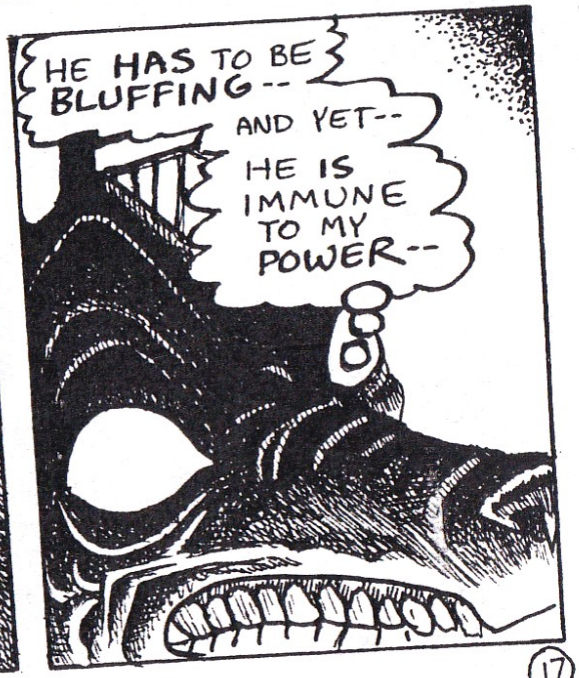

CARE TO GIVE IT ONE MORE SHOT, ZANNY, OLD FRUIT?

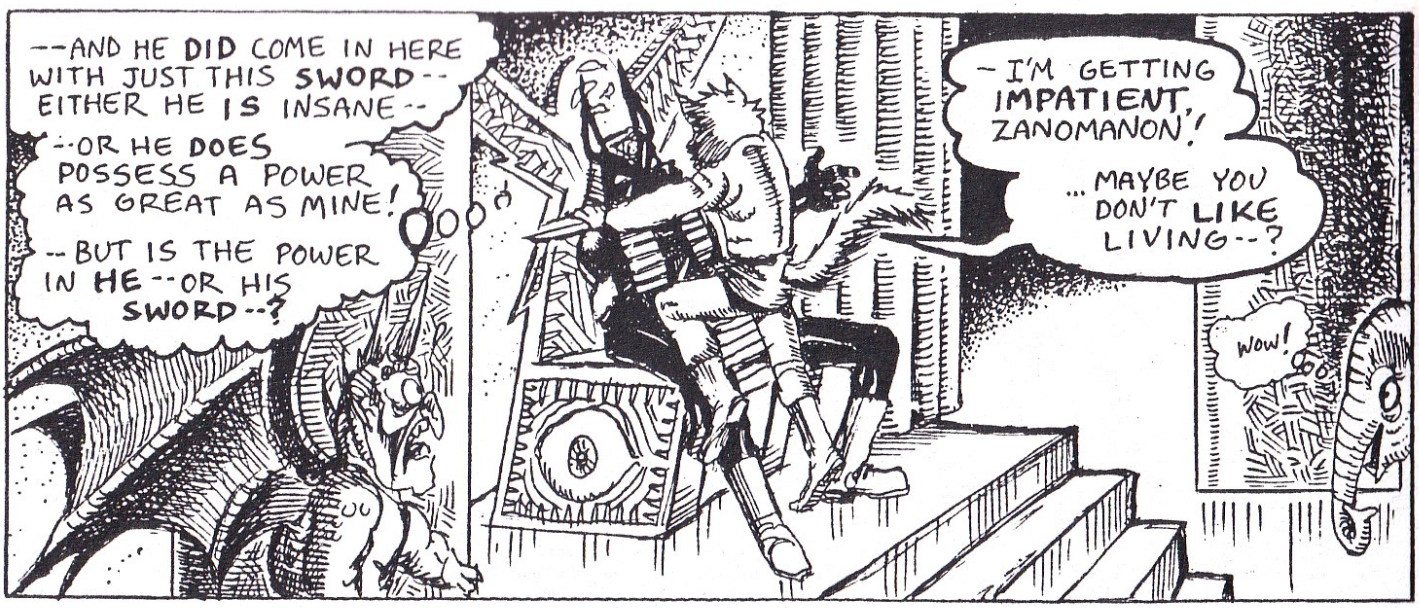
ZAK...
ZIT!
ZOM!
ZHOP!
GASP!
--I'M ALL USED UP!
WHUMP!
UGH!
THIS IS IT!
HERE GOES--
HOPE THIS WORKS!


NOW, VILLAIN -- RELEASE CATHERINE OR I'LL REALLY GET ROUGH!!

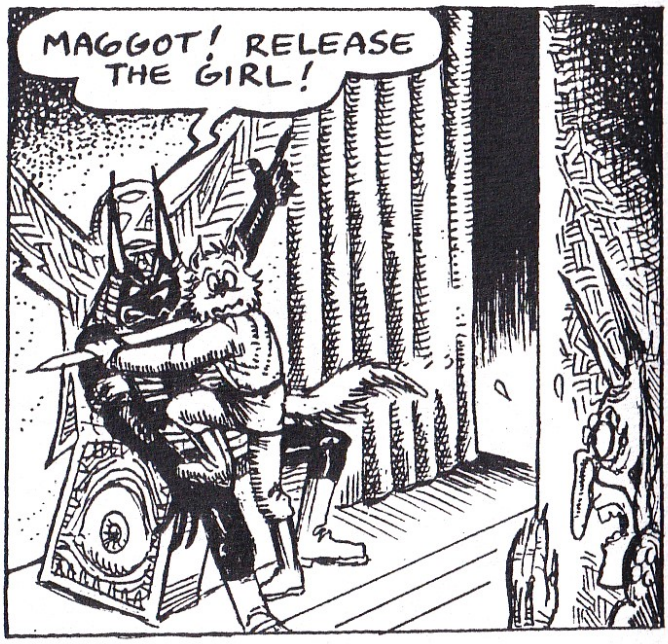
YOU'RE INSANE, CAT! DO YOU THINK I'LL LET YOU WALTZ IN HERE WITH A SWORD AND TAKE MY MOST PRIZED POSSESSION -- ?!
YES, I DO!


YOU SEE, I'VE GOT A SECRET, YOU FOOL -- -- AND IF YOU'RE NOT VERY CAREFUL -- YOU'RE GOING TO MAKE ME USE IT!!

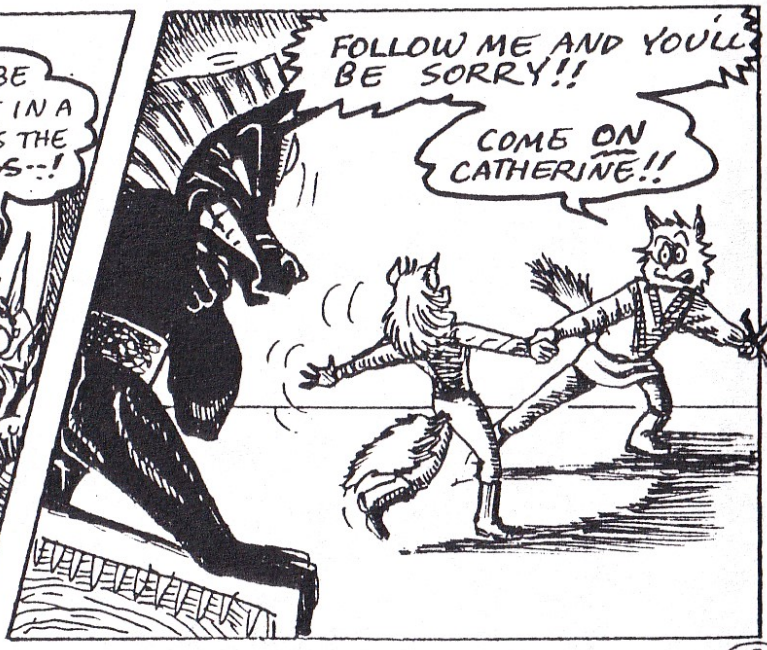

HE HAS TO BE BLUFFING -- AND YET -- HE IS IMMUNE TO MY POWER --


--AND HE DID COME IN HERE WITH JUST THIS SWORD-- EITHER HE IS INSANE--
--OR HE DOES POSSESS A POWER AS GREAT AS MINE!
--BUT IS THE POWER IN HE--OR HIS SWORD--?
--I'M GETTING IMPATIENT, ZANOMANON!
...MAYBE YOU DON'T LIKE LIVING--?
WOW!

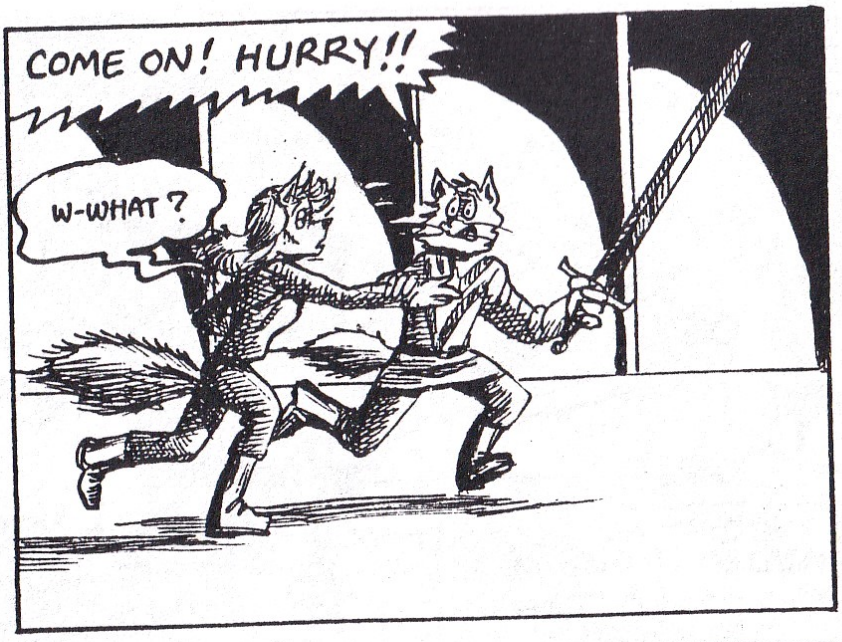
VERY WELL, MR. KITTY-- TAKE THE GIRL... BUT YOU'RE GOING TO REGRET THIS-- BELIEVE ME--!

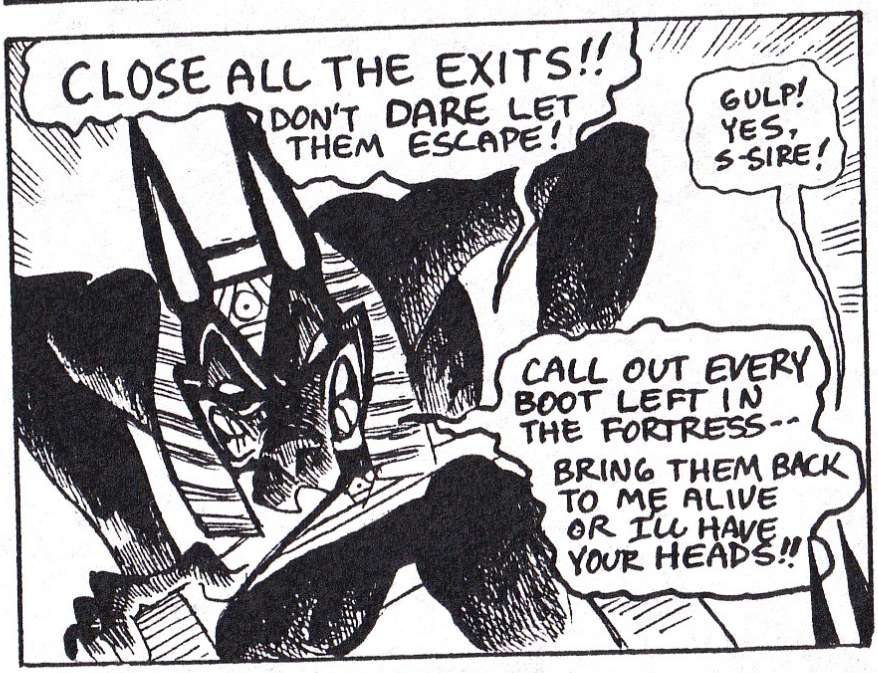

MAGGOT! RELEASE THE GIRL!

CATHERINE!--WHAT'S WRONG WITH HER?!
SHE'LL BE ALRIGHT IN A BIT-- IT'S THE DRUGS--!


FOLLOW ME AND YOU'LL BE SORRY!!
COME ON CATHERINE!!

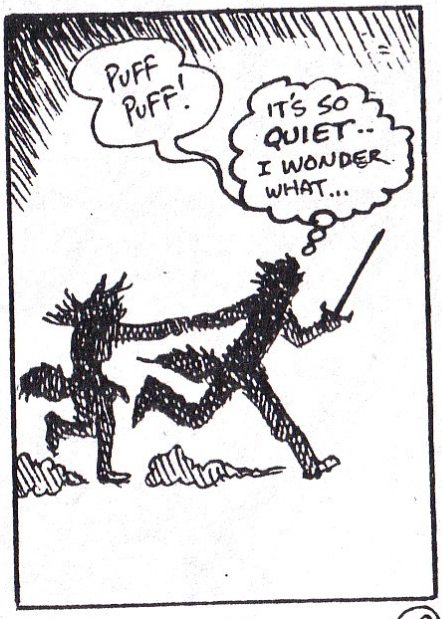
LET'S GO!!
W-WALTER...?

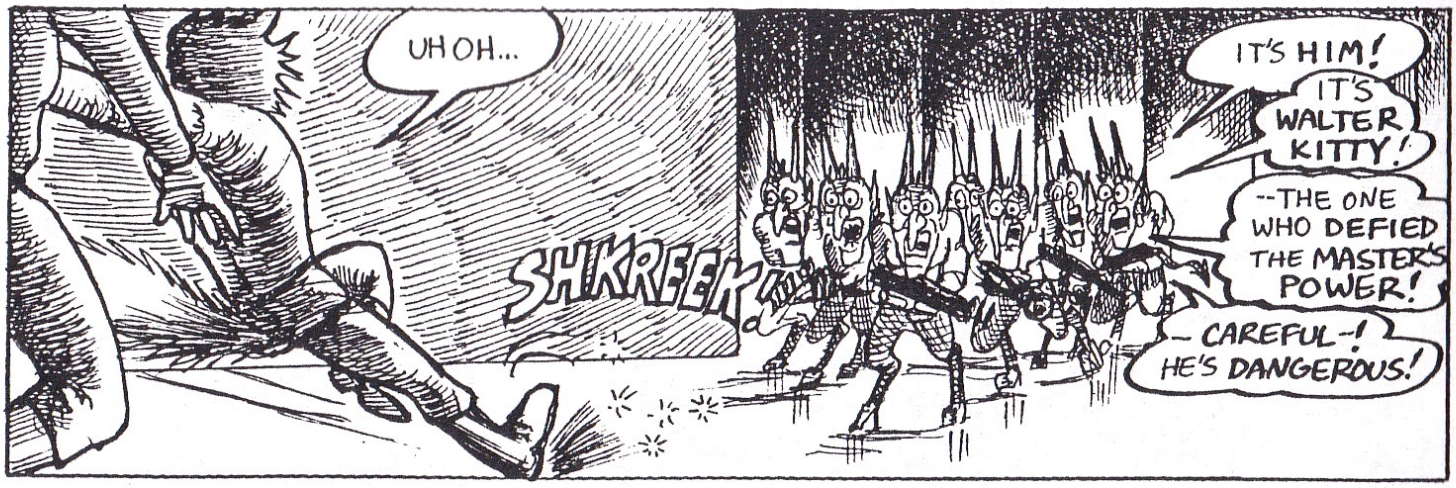

COME ON! HURRY!!
W-WHAT?

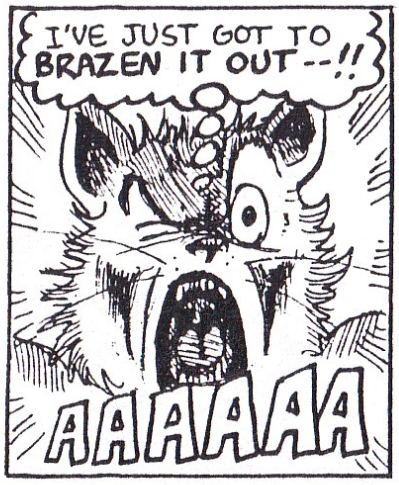

CLOSE ALL THE EXITS!! DON'T DARE LET THEM ESCAPE!
GULP! YES, S-SIRE!
CALL OUT EVERY BOOT LEFT IN THE FORTRESS-- BRING THEM BACK TO ME ALIVE OR I'LL HAVE YOUR HEADS!!

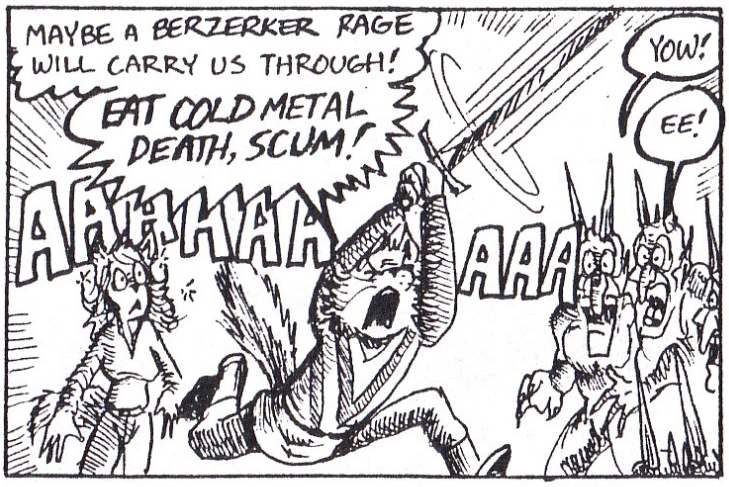
GET THEM!!
YESSIR! YESSIR!!

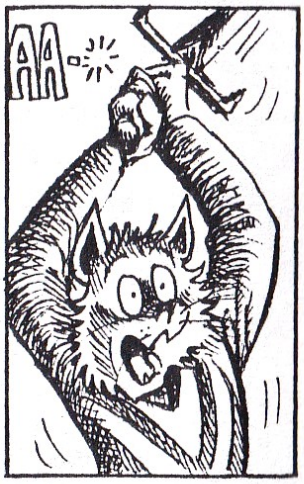
GET THE ARACHNA-TRACTOR!
SINCE MOST OF OUR FORCES ARE AT ACHARTA, WE CAN'T TAKE ANY CHANCES...
THIS GUY COULD BE EXTREMELY DANGEROUS!

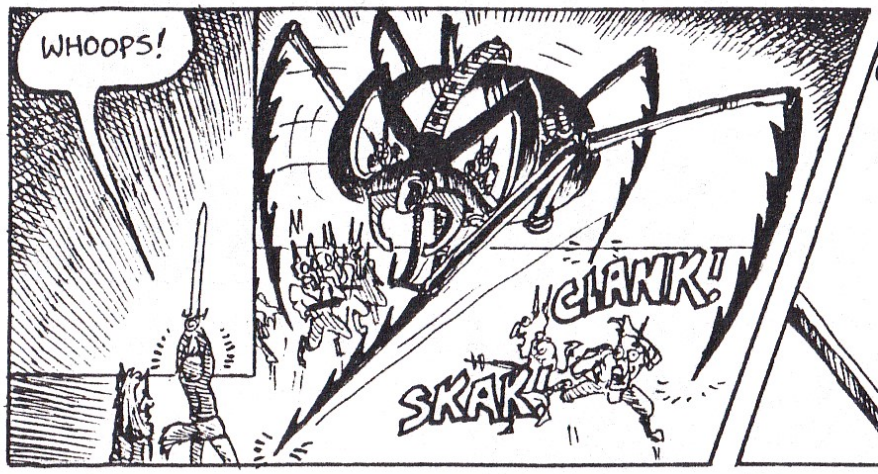

PUFF PUFF!
IT'S SO QUIET.. I WONDER WHAT...


UH OH...
SHKREEK!
IT'S HIM!
IT'S WALTER KITTY!
--THE ONE WHO DEFIED THE MASTER'S POWER!
-- CAREFUL --! HE'S DANGEROUS!

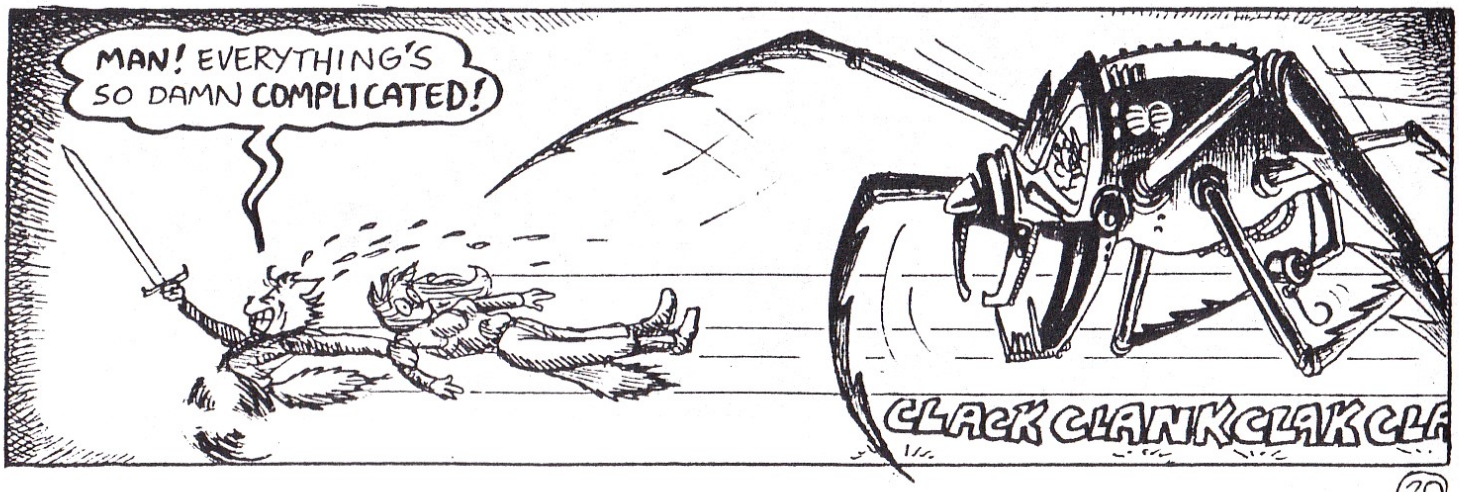

I'VE JUST GOT TO BRAZEN IT OUT --!!
AAAAAA

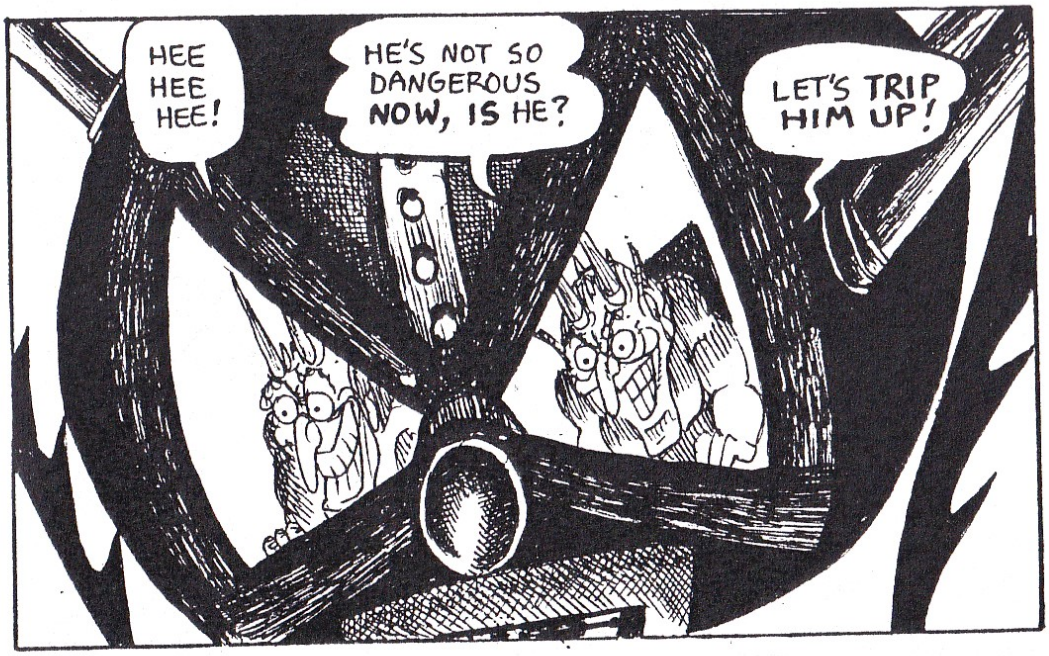

MAYBE A BERZERKER RAGE WILL CARRY US THROUGH!
EAT COLD METAL DEATH, SCUM!
AAAHHAA
AAA
YOW!
EE!

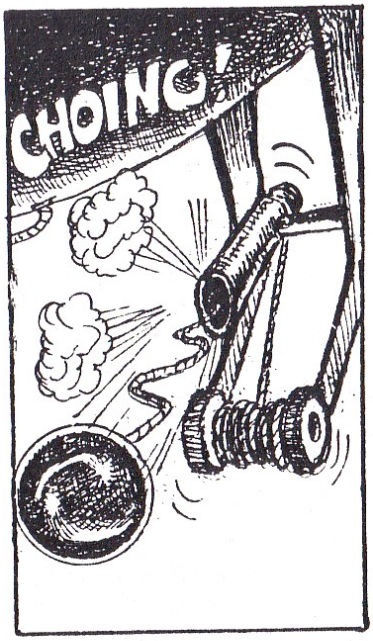

AA

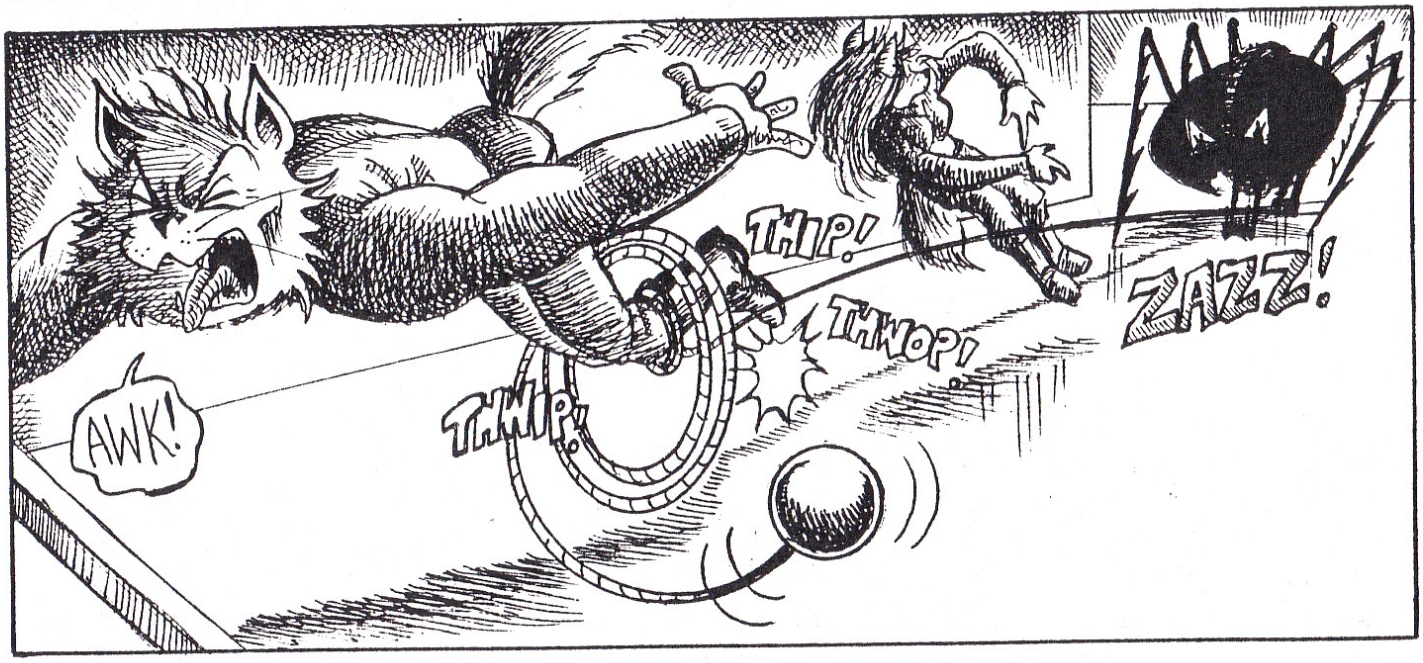

WHOOPS!
CLANK!
SKRAK!

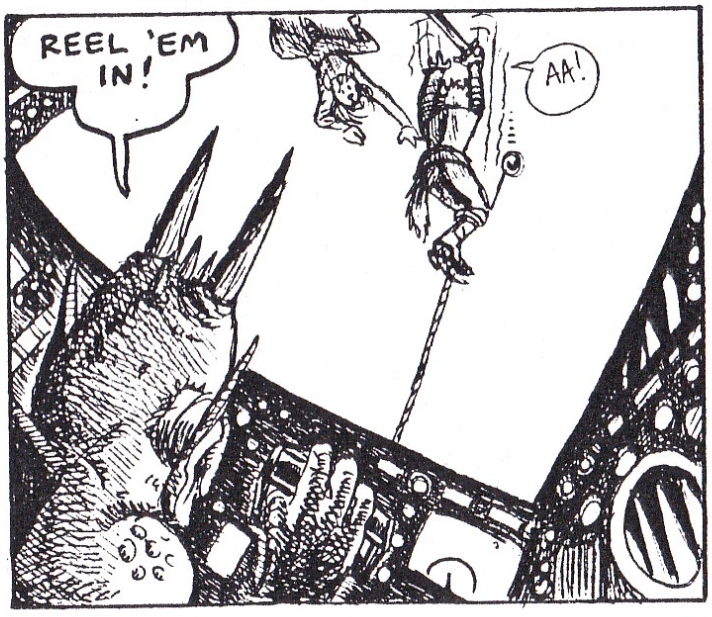
WELL, IF WE CAN'T GO FORWARD WE'LL JUST HAVE TO GO BACK!
-- COME ON, CATH!

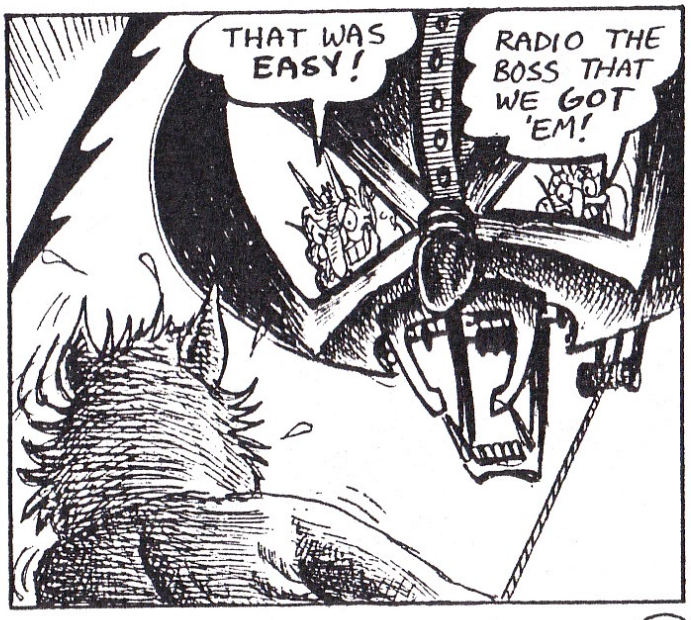

MAN! EVERYTHING'S SO DAMN COMPLICATED!
CLACK CLANK CLAK CLA


HEE HEE HEE!
HE'S NOT SO DANGEROUS NOW, IS HE?
LET'S TRIP HIM UP!


CHOING!

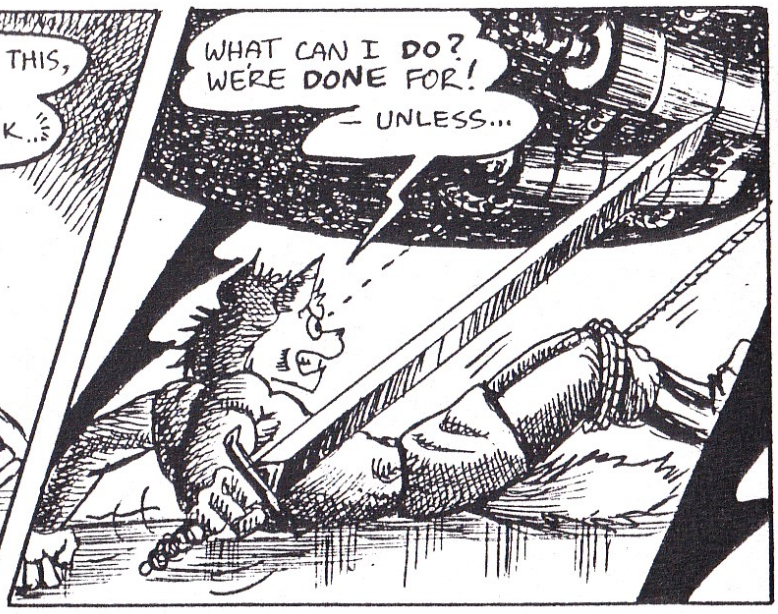

AWK!
THWIP!
THIP!
THWOP!
ZAZZ!

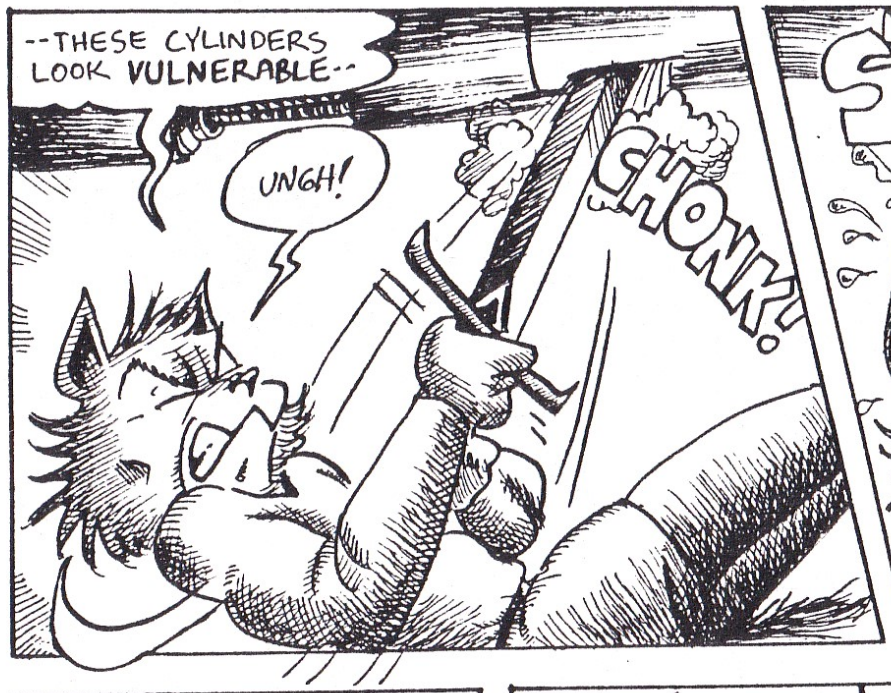

REEL 'EM IN!
AA!

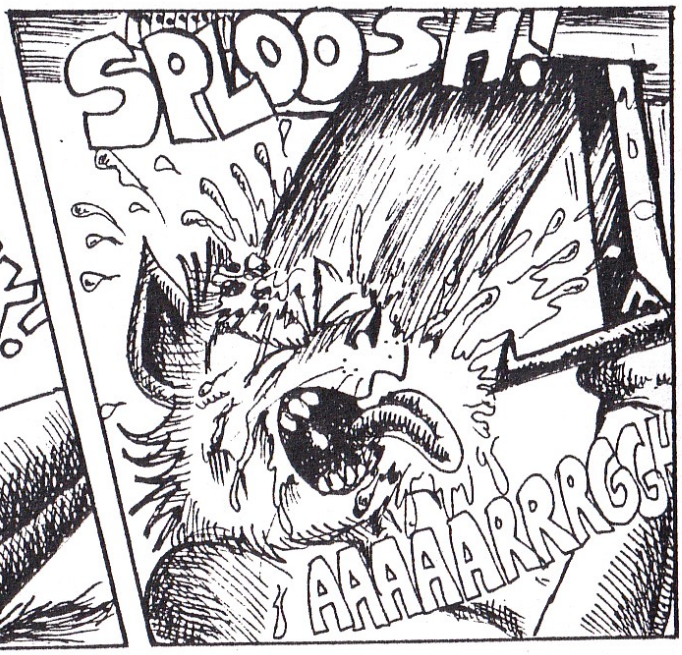

THAT WAS EASY!
RADIO THE BOSS THAT WE GOT 'EM!

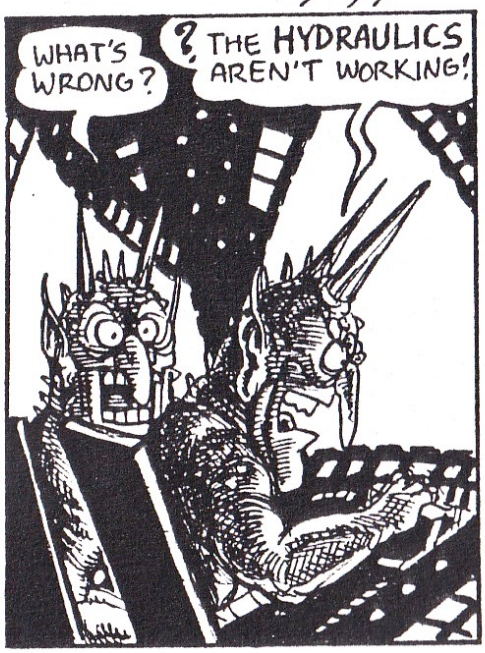
I DON'T SUPPOSE THERE'S ANY POSSIBILITY YOU COULD CALL UP THE SOURCE YET, IS THERE, CATHERINE?

I'M DREAMING THIS, AREN'T I?
BLINK BLINK...
NO, I GUESS NOT...


WHAT CAN I DO? WE'RE DONE FOR!
— UNLESS...

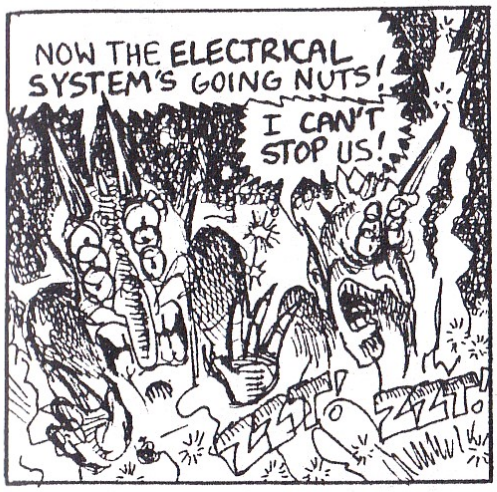

--THESE CYLINDERS LOOK VULNERABLE--
UNGH!
CHONK!

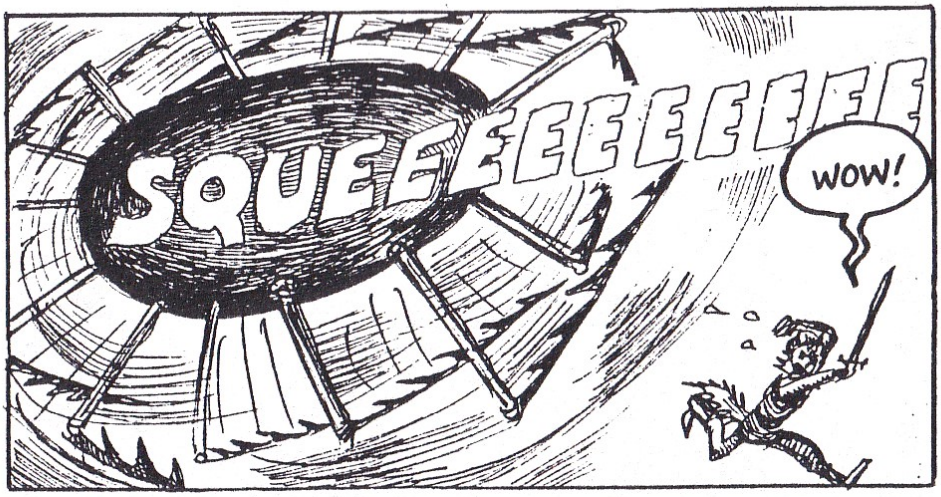

SPLOOSH!
AAAAARRRGGH

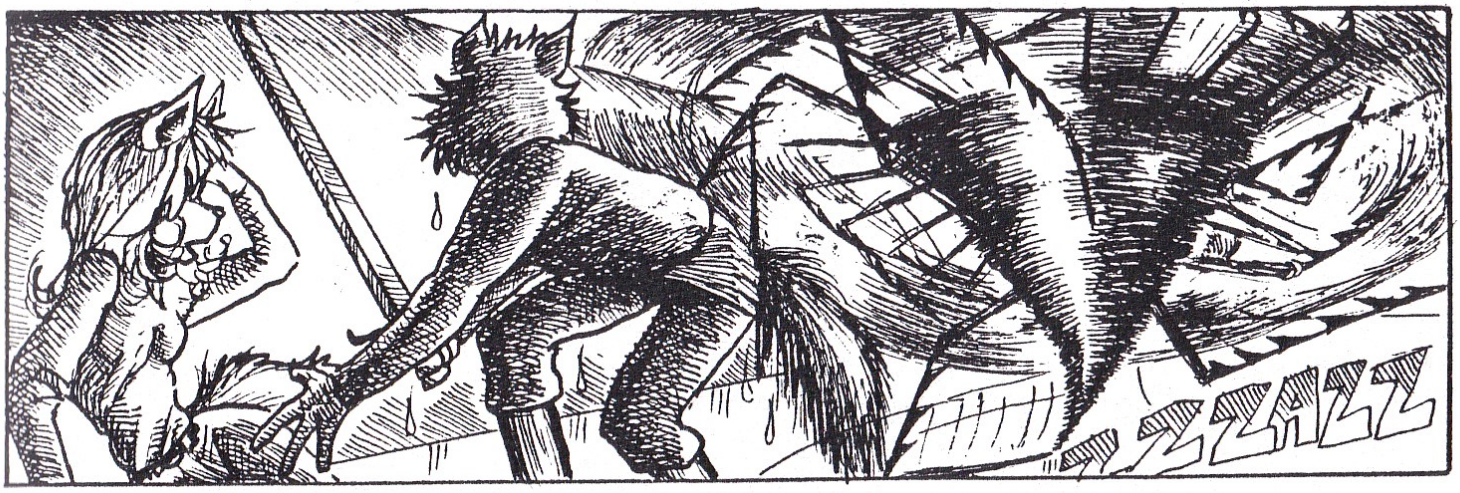

WHAT'S WRONG?
THE HYDRAULICS AREN'T WORKING!

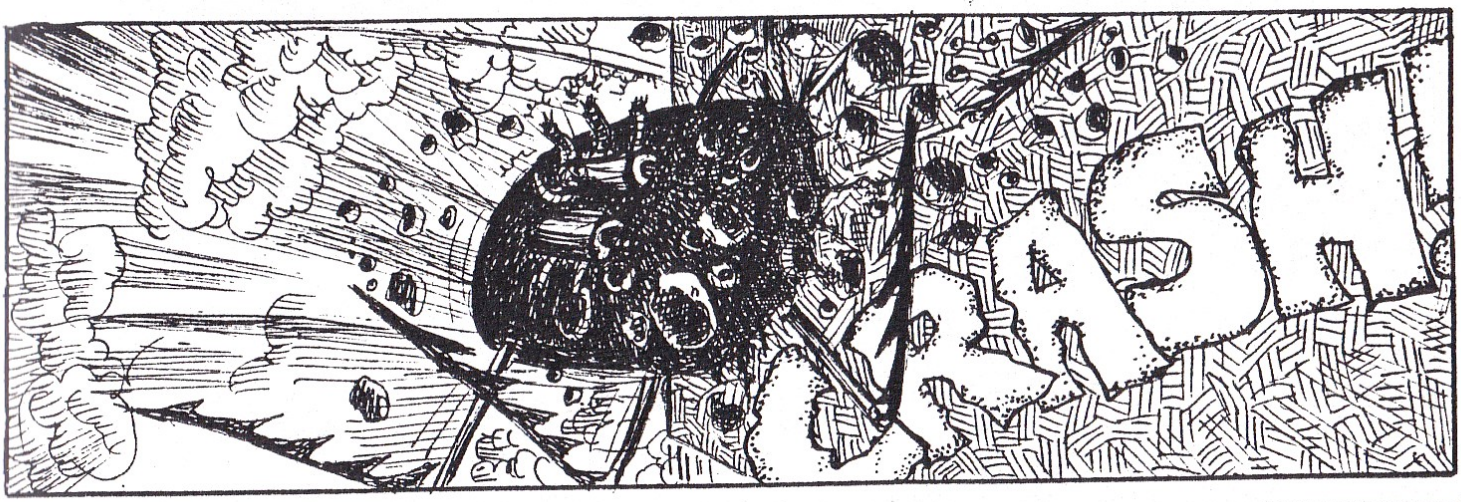
I DID IT! THE CABLE STOPPED!
NOW, LET'S SEE IF I CAN DO ANYTHING ELSE!

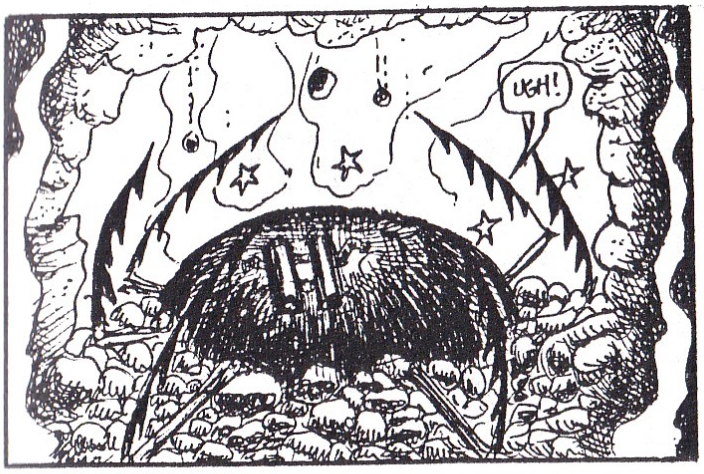
SKA
NGH!

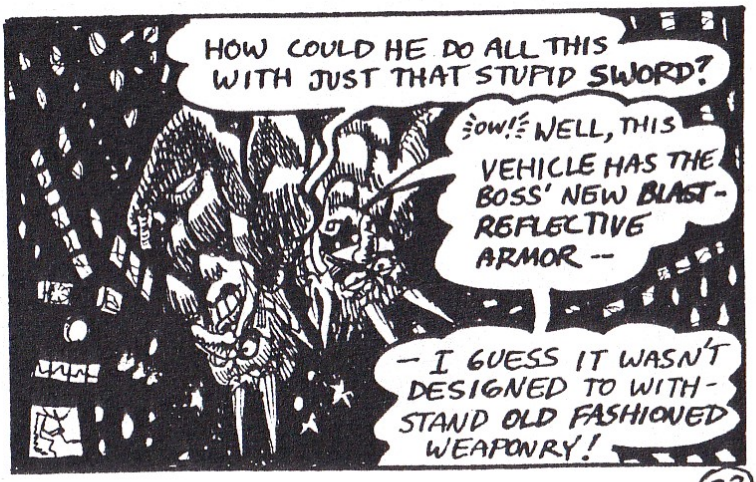

NOW THE ELECTRICAL SYSTEM'S GOING NUTS!
I CAN'T STOP US!
ZZZZT!
ZZZZT!

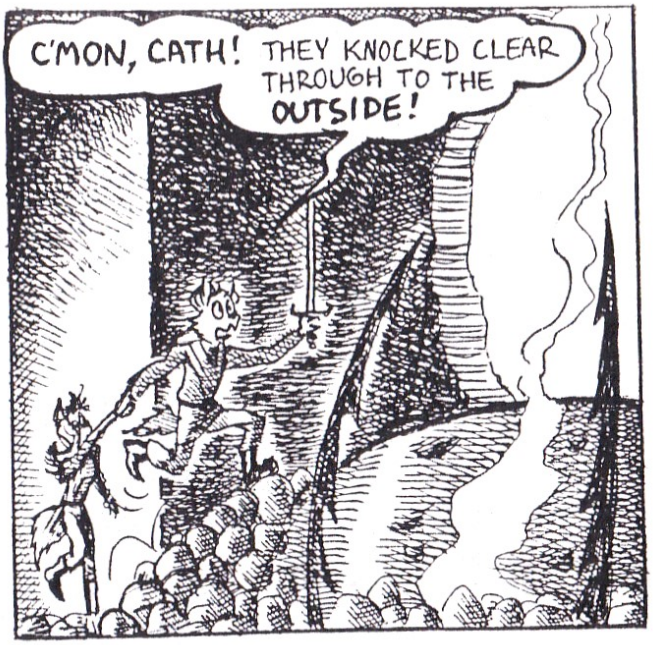

SQUEEEEEEEEE
WOW!

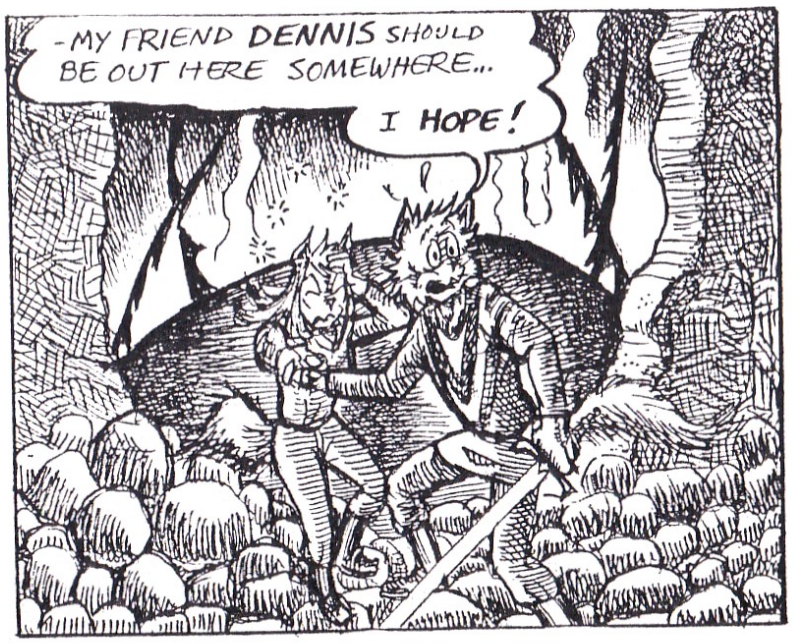

ZZAZZ

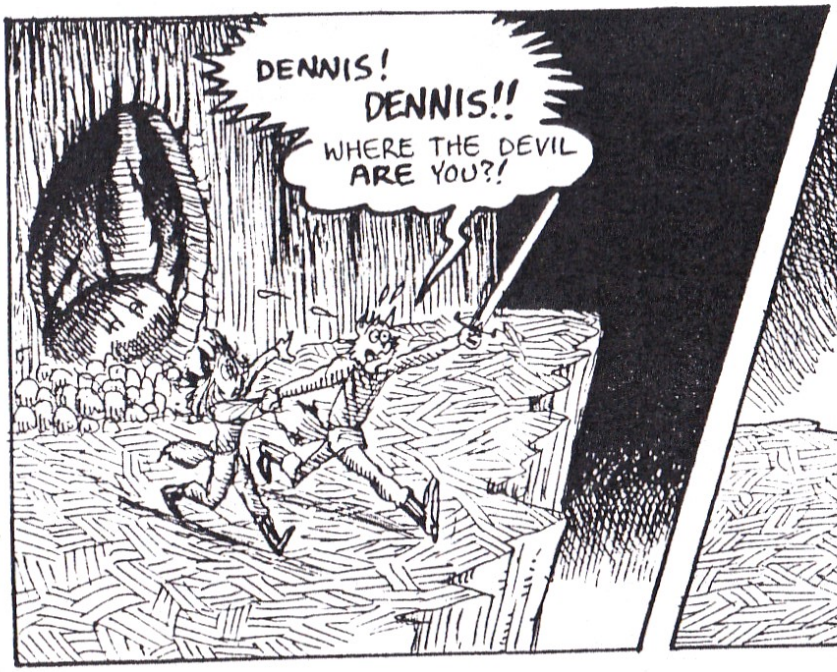

BASH

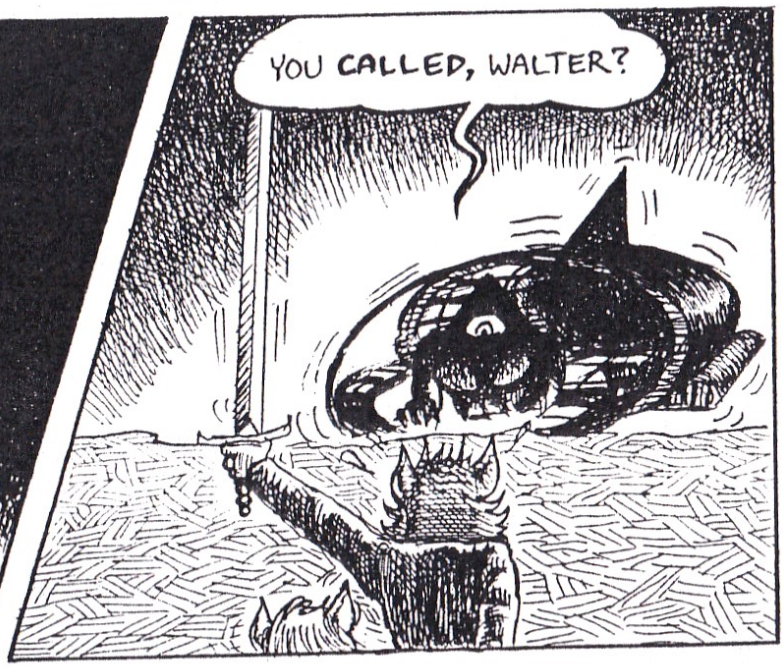

UGH!

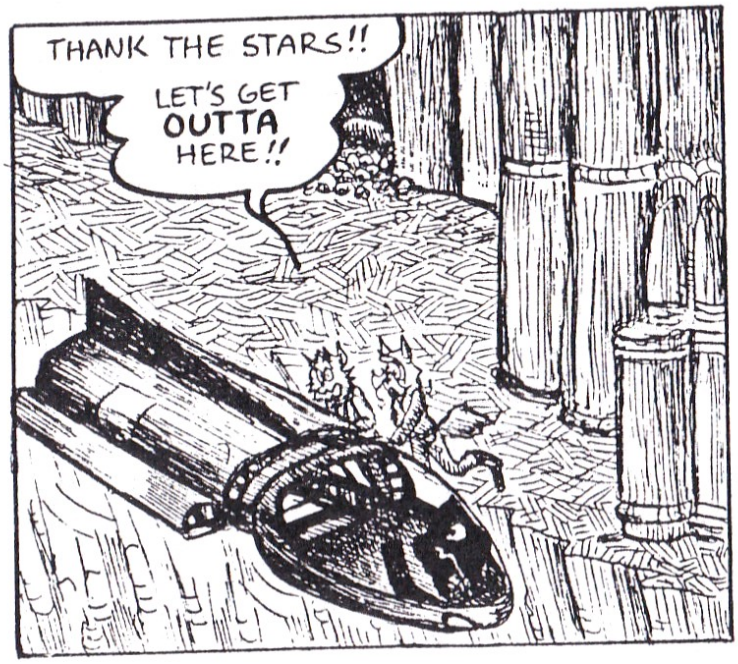

HOW COULD HE DO ALL THIS WITH JUST THAT STUPID SWORD?
OW! WELL, THIS VEHICLE HAS THE BOSS' NEW BLAST-REFLECTIVE ARMOR --
-- I GUESS IT WASN'T DESIGNED TO WITHSTAND OLD FASHIONED WEAPONRY!

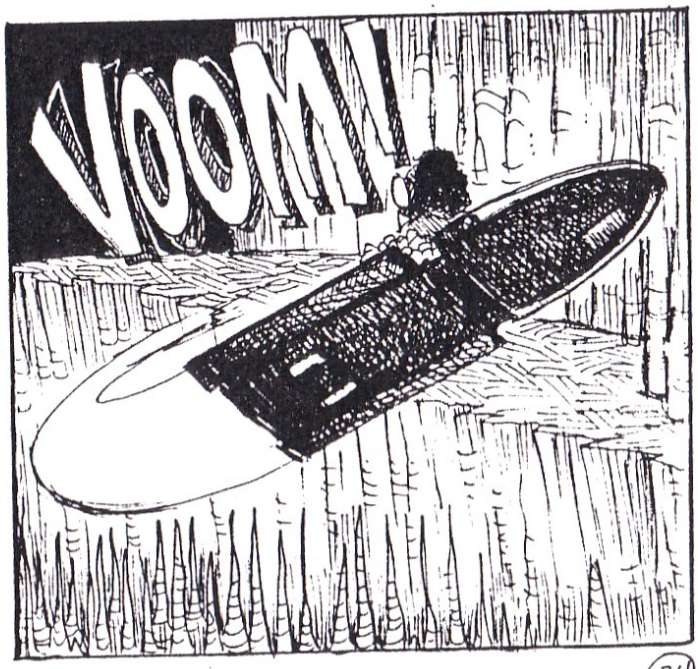

C'MON, CATH! THEY KNOCKED CLEAR THROUGH TO THE OUTSIDE!


-MY FRIEND DENNIS SHOULD BE OUT HERE SOMEWHERE...
I HOPE!


DENNIS! DENNIS!! WHERE THE DEVIL ARE YOU?!


YOU CALLED, WALTER?


THANK THE STARS!!
LET'S GET OUTTA HERE!!

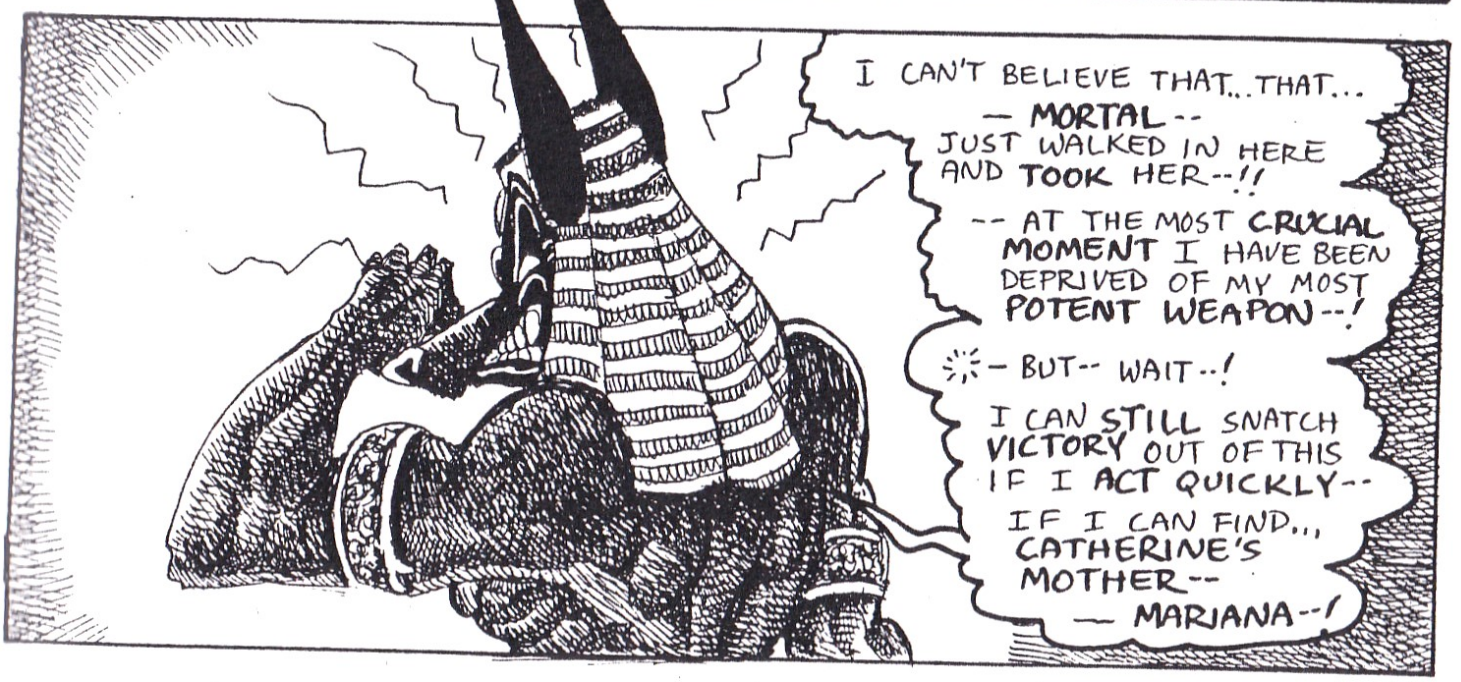

VOOM!

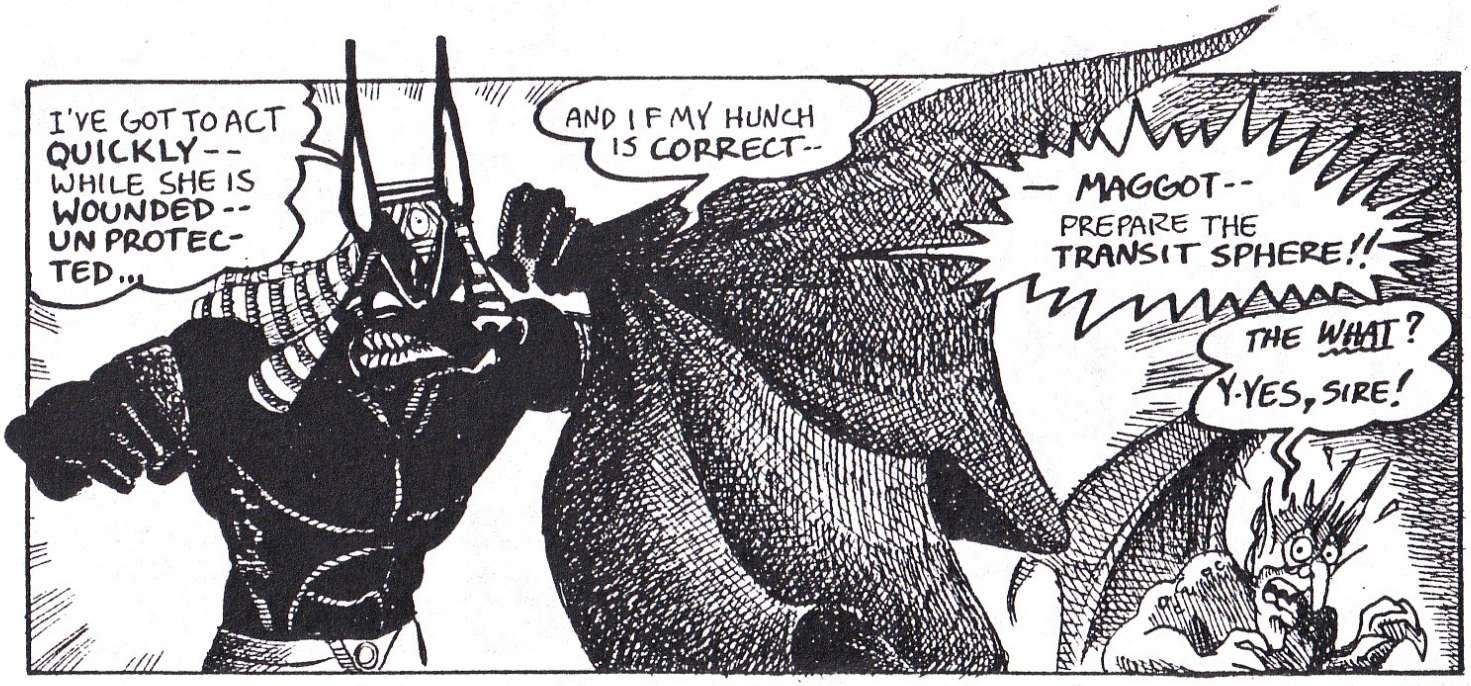
YOU HANDLED THAT VERY WELL, WALTER! CONGRATULATIONS!!
CATHERINE! ARE YOU OKAY!?

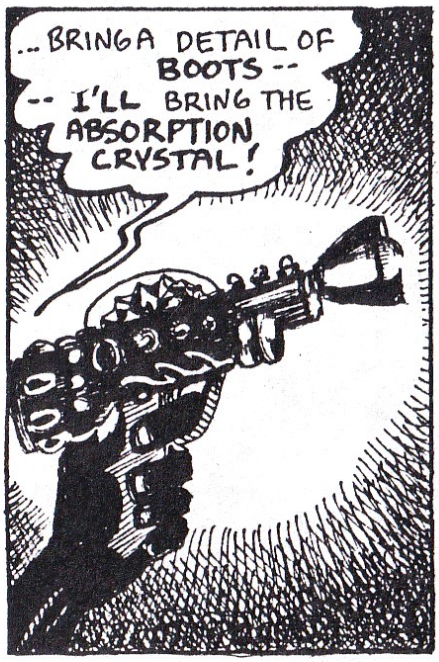
BLINK! BLINK!
WALTER--?

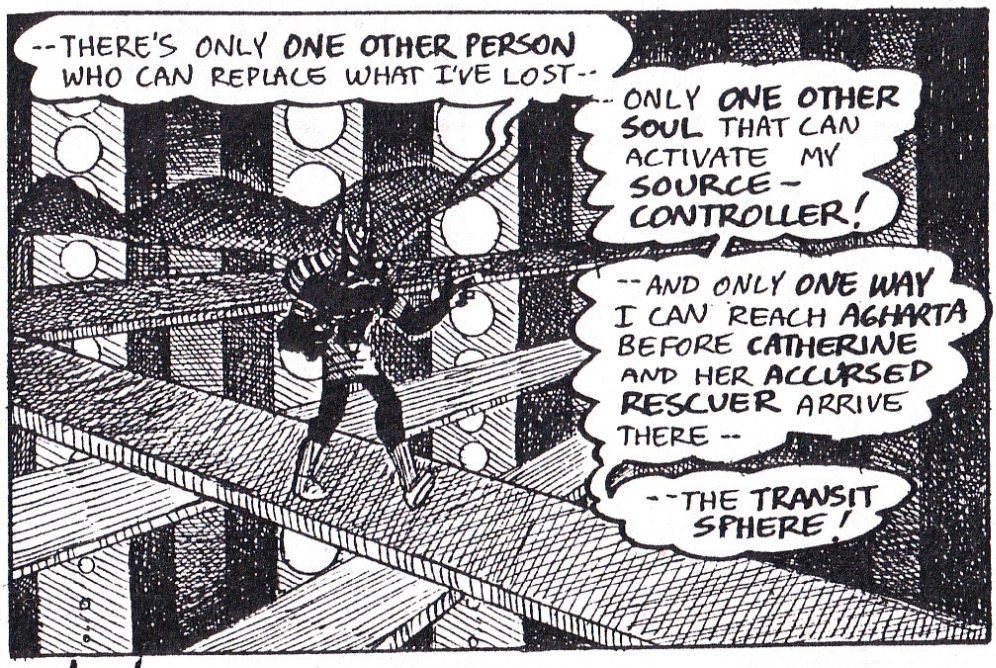
— OH, WALTER! SOB!
IT'S OK-- IT'S OK!
YOU'RE SAFE, NOW!

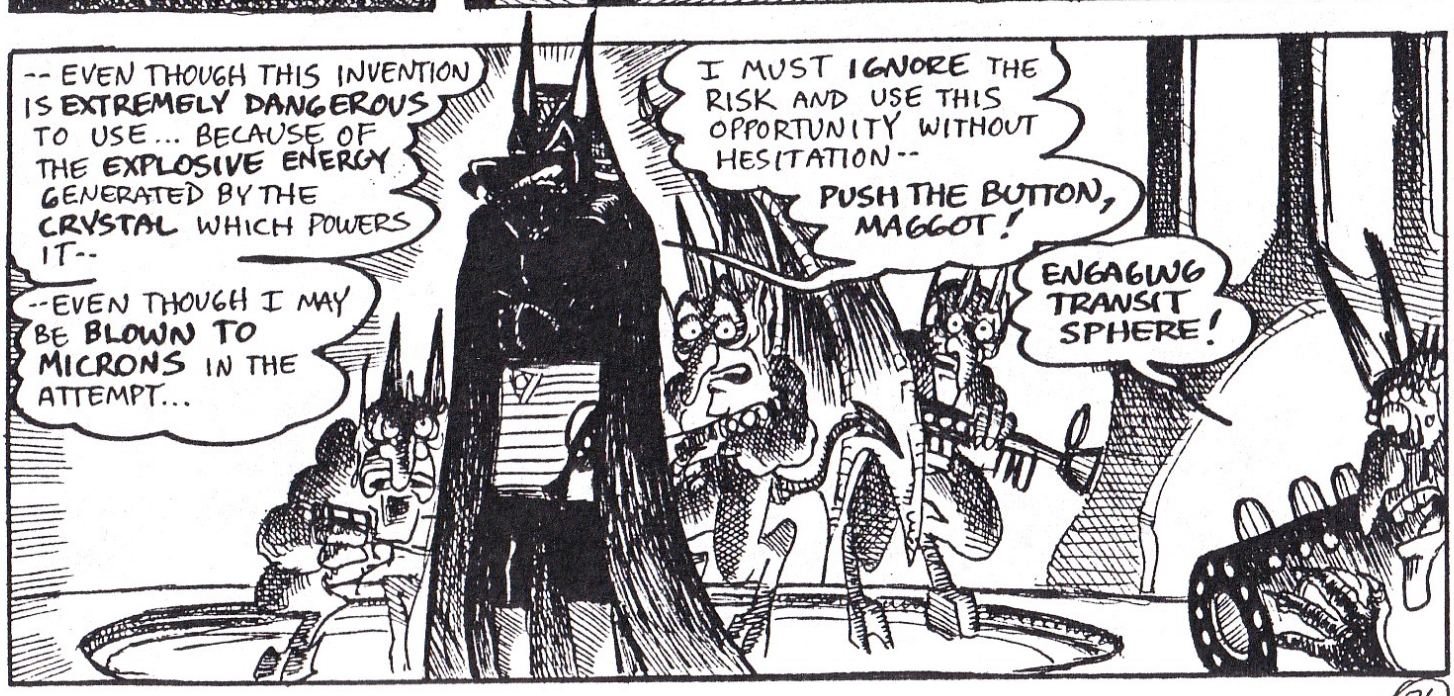
AHEM... WELL... WE'LL HEAD FOR AGHARTA-- AT THE EARTH'S CORE... THAT'S WHERE WE'LL BE WELCOME...
... AND NEEDED!

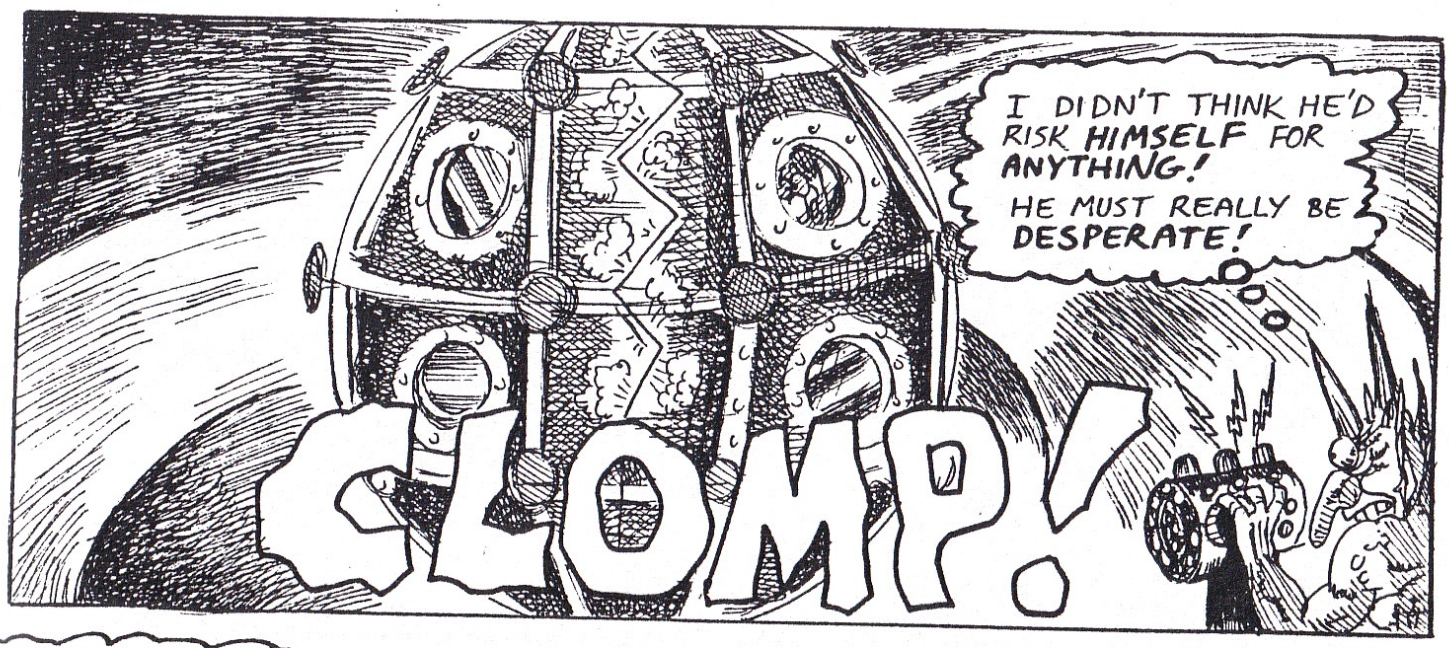

I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT...THAT... — MORTAL-- JUST WALKED IN HERE AND TOOK HER--!!
-- AT THE MOST CRUCIAL MOMENT I HAVE BEEN DEPRIVED OF MY MOST POTENT WEAPON--!
— BUT-- WAIT--!
I CAN STILL SNATCH VICTORY OUT OF THIS IF I ACT QUICKLY--
IF I CAN FIND... CATHERINE'S MOTHER-- — MARIANA--!

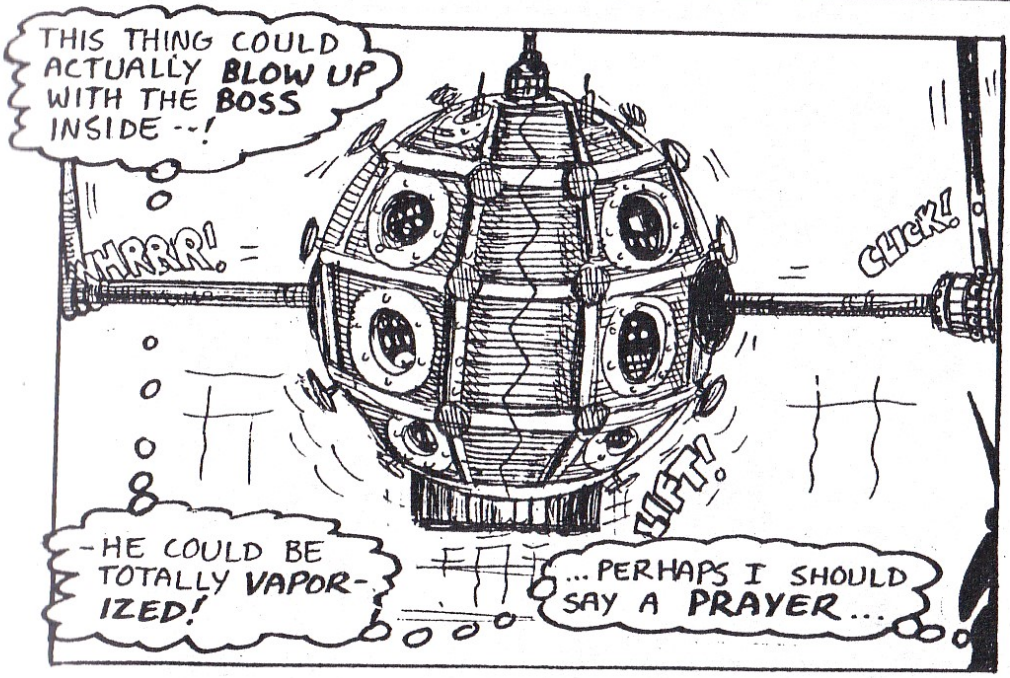

I'VE GOT TO ACT QUICKLY-- WHILE SHE IS WOUNDED-- UNPROTECTED...
AND IF MY HUNCH IS CORRECT--
— MAGGOT-- PREPARE THE TRANSIT SPHERE!!
THE WHAT?
Y-YES, SIRE!

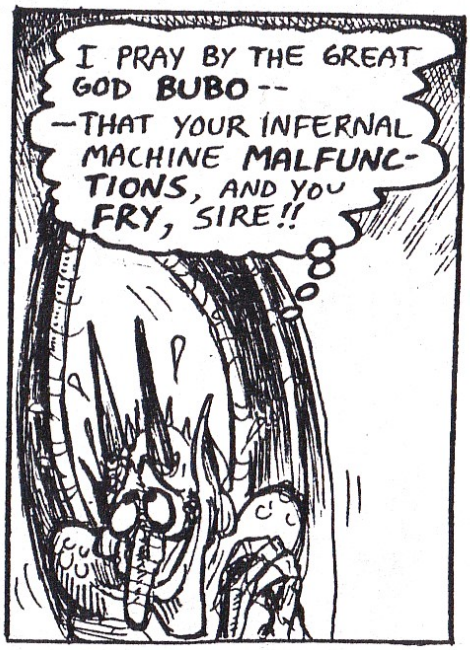

...BRING A DETAIL OF BOOTS--
-- I'LL BRING THE ABSORPTION CRYSTAL!

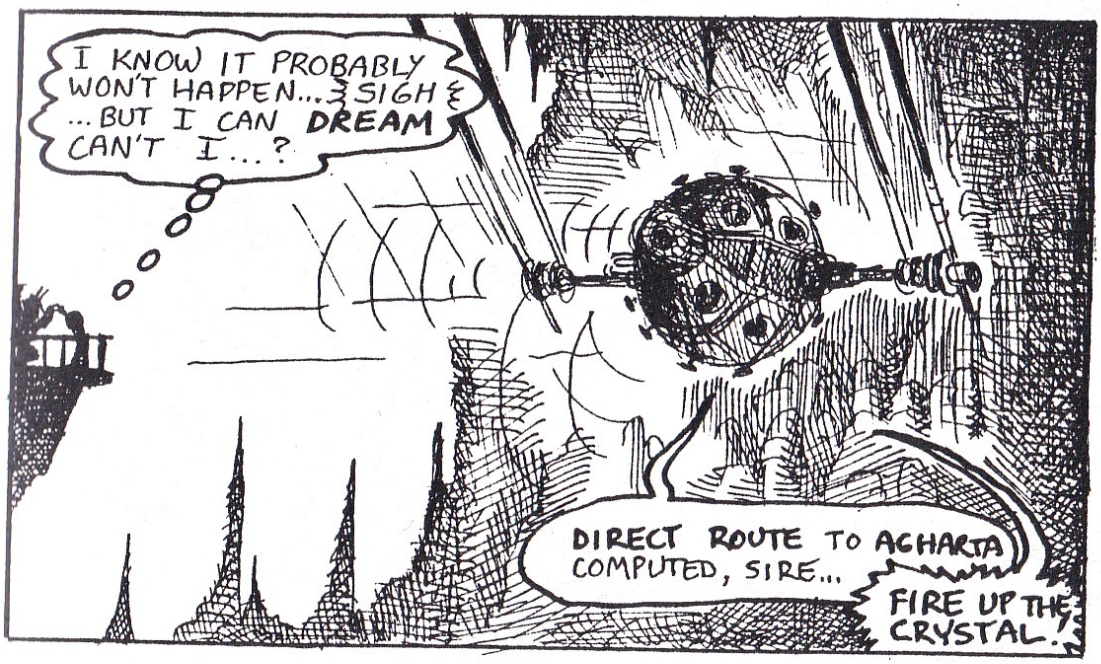

--THERE'S ONLY ONE OTHER PERSON WHO CAN REPLACE WHAT I'VE LOST--
ONLY ONE OTHER SOUL THAT CAN ACTIVATE MY SOURCE-CONTROLLER!
--AND ONLY ONE WAY I CAN REACH AGHARTA BEFORE CATHERINE AND HER ACCURSED RESCUER ARRIVE THERE --
--THE TRANSIT SPHERE!

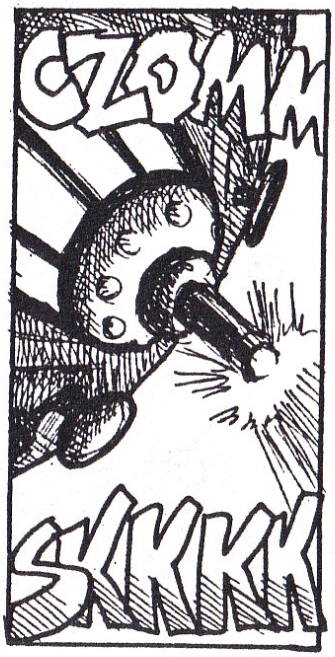

-- EVEN THOUGH THIS INVENTION IS EXTREMELY DANGEROUS TO USE... BECAUSE OF THE EXPLOSIVE ENERGY GENERATED BY THE CRYSTAL WHICH POWERS IT--
--EVEN THOUGH I MAY BE BLOWN TO MICRONS IN THE ATTEMPT...
I MUST IGNORE THE RISK AND USE THIS OPPORTUNITY WITHOUT HESITATION--
PUSH THE BUTTON, MAGGOT!
ENGAGING TRANSIT SPHERE!


CLOMP!
I DIDN'T THINK HE'D RISK HIMSELF FOR ANYTHING!
HE MUST REALLY BE DESPERATE!

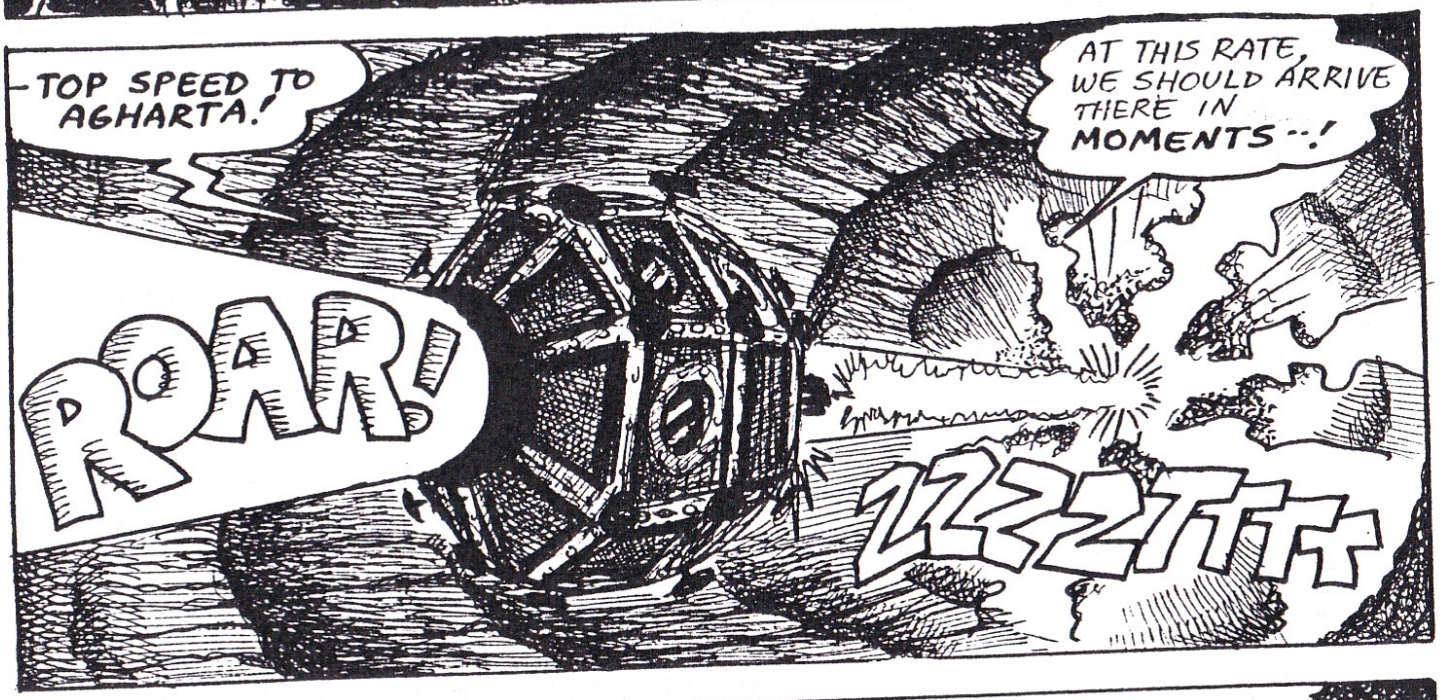

THIS THING COULD ACTUALLY BLOW UP WITH THE BOSS INSIDE --!
THRRR!
CHCK!
SHFT!
-HE COULD BE TOTALLY VAPORIZED!
...PERHAPS I SHOULD SAY A PRAYER...

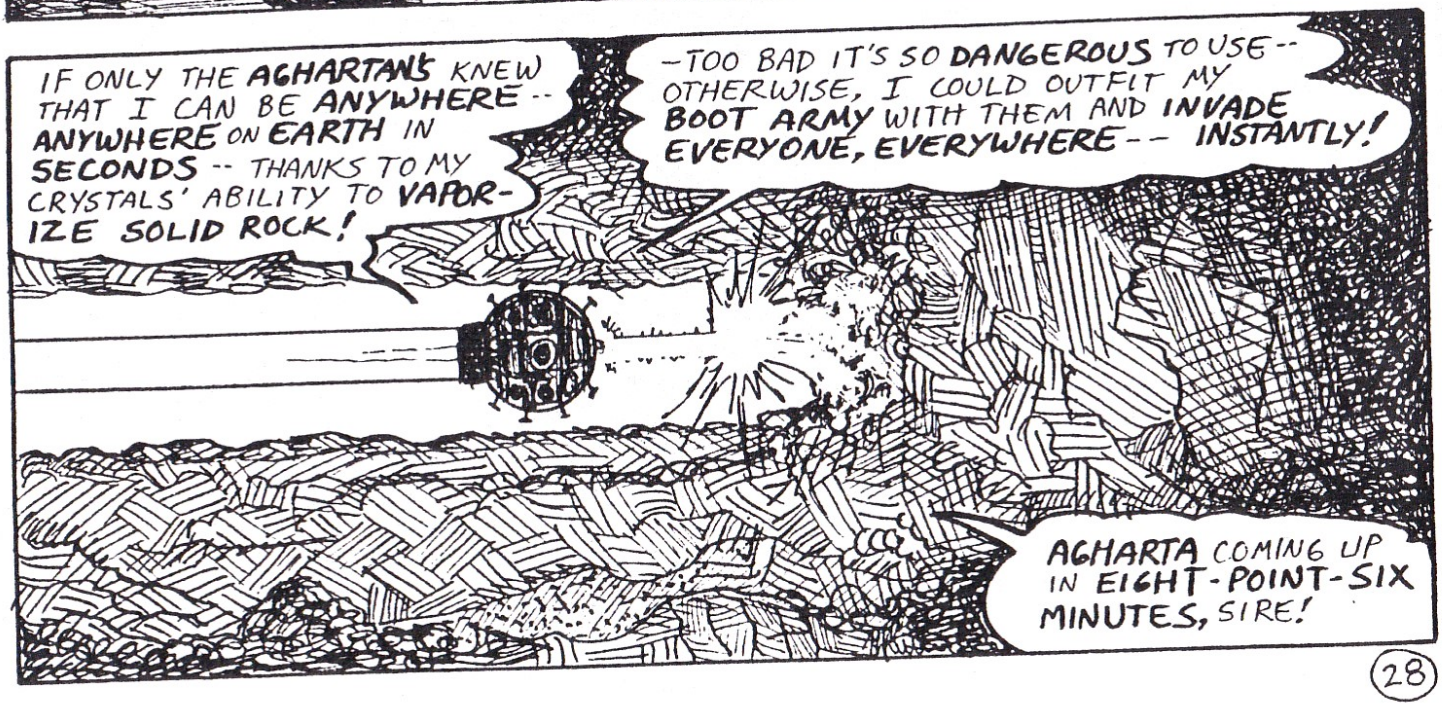

I PRAY BY THE GREAT GOD BUBO --
--THAT YOUR INFERNAL MACHINE MALFUNCTIONS, AND YOU FRY, SIRE!!


I KNOW IT PROBABLY WON'T HAPPEN... SIGH & ...BUT I CAN DREAM CAN'T I...?
DIRECT ROUTE TO ACHARTA COMPUTED, SIRE...
FIRE UP THE CRYSTAL!

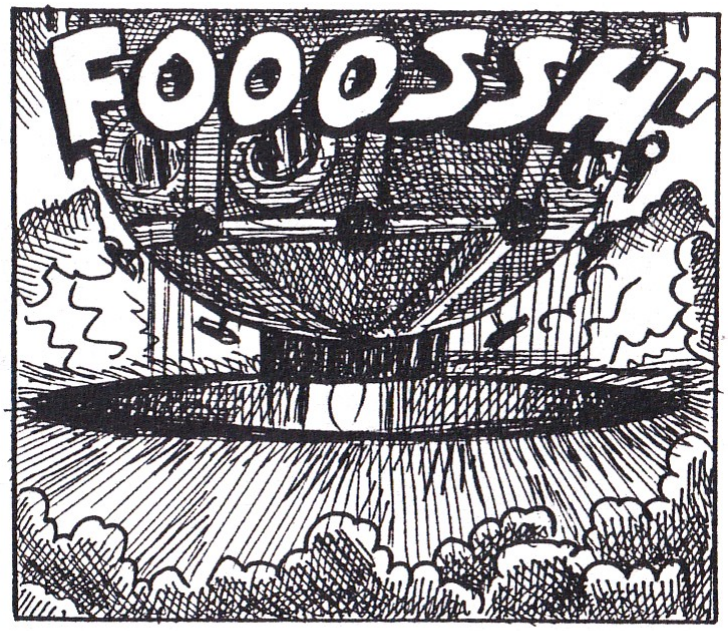

CLOMM
SKKKK

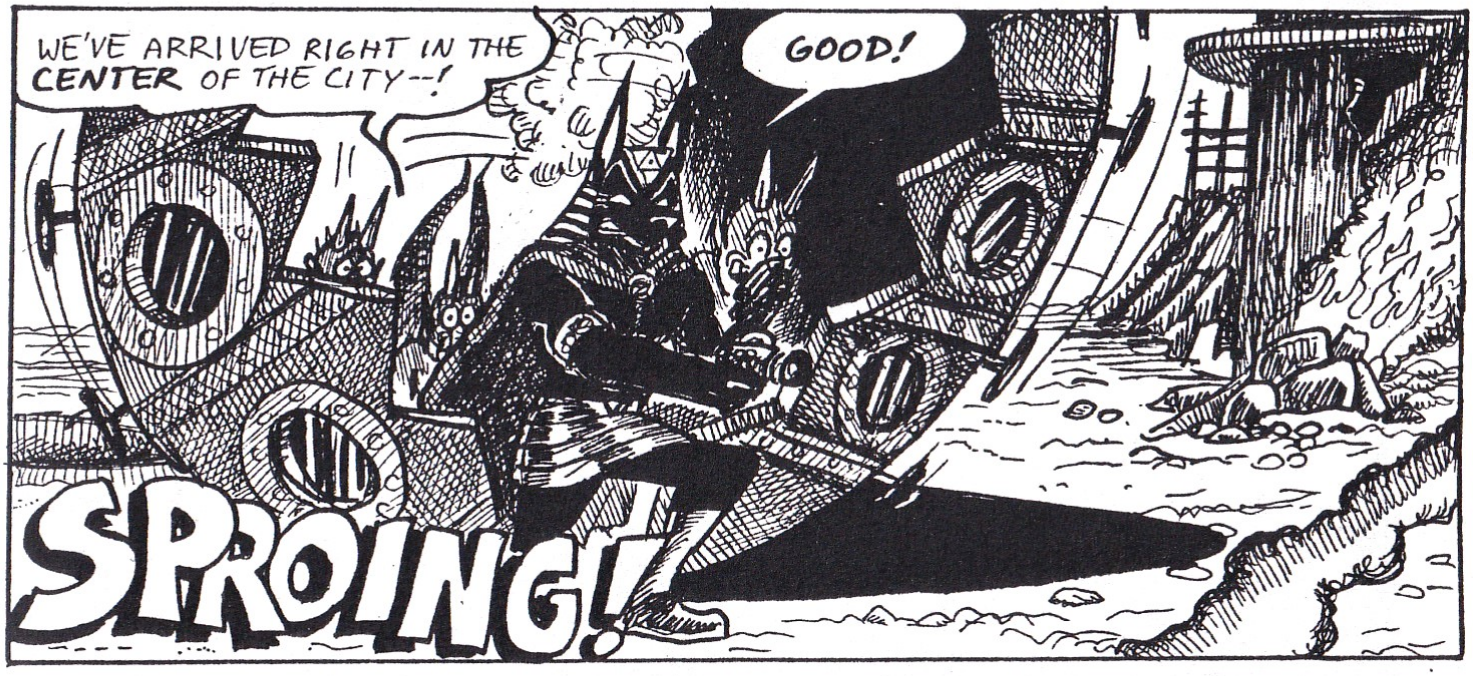
-ROCK VAPORIZING! THE TUNNEL IS FORMING, SIRE!
- EXCELLENT! IT'S WORKING!
TURN IT UP TO MAXIMUM... AND THEN...

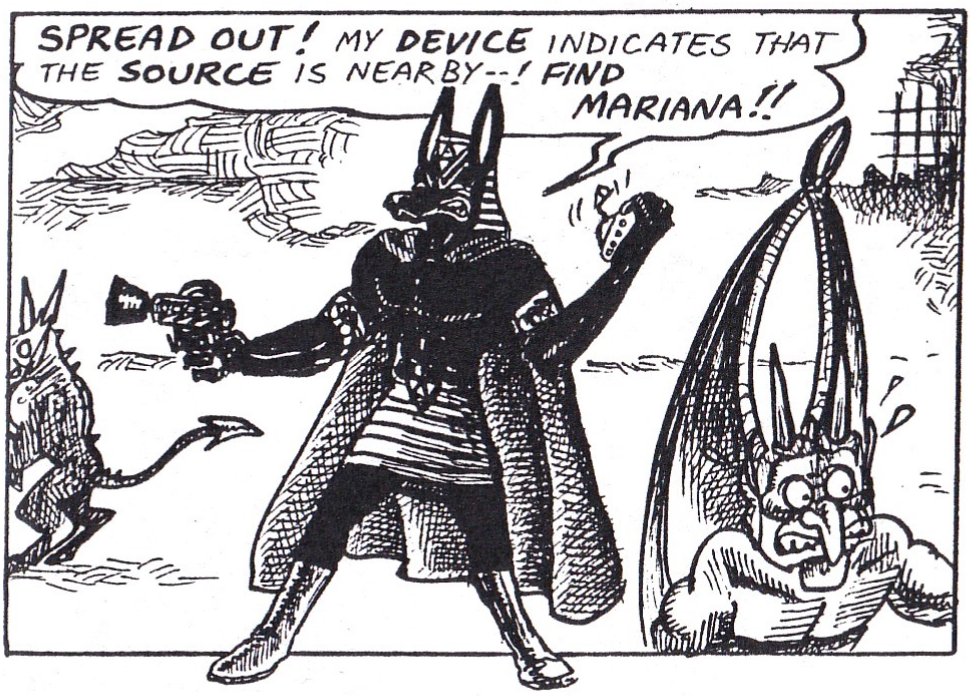

-TOP SPEED TO AGHARTA!
AT THIS RATE, WE SHOULD ARRIVE THERE IN MOMENTS --!
ROAR!
IZZZTTT


IF ONLY THE AGHARTAN'S KNEW THAT I CAN BE ANYWHERE -- ANYWHERE ON EARTH IN SECONDS -- THANKS TO MY CRYSTALS' ABILITY TO VAPORIZE SOLID ROCK!
-TOO BAD IT'S SO DANGEROUS TO USE -- OTHERWISE, I COULD OUTFIT MY BOOT ARMY WITH THEM AND INVADE EVERYONE, EVERYWHERE -- INSTANTLY!
AGHARTA COMING UP IN EIGHT-POINT-SIX MINUTES, SIRE!

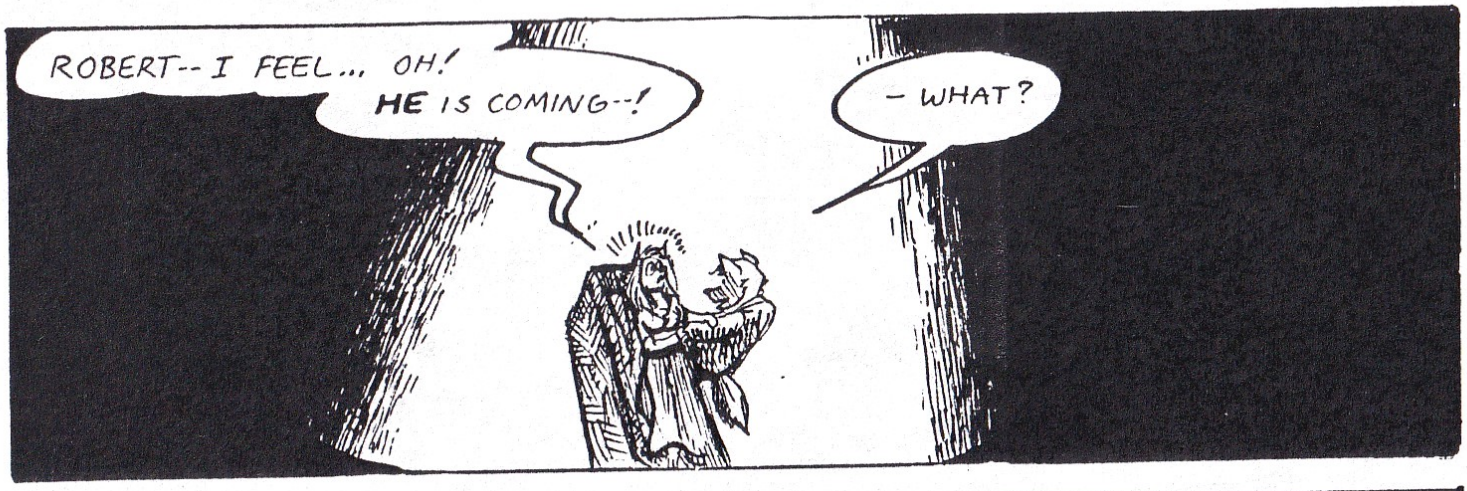
ACHARTA... EIGHT POINT SIX MINUTES LATER...
SSKKTT!

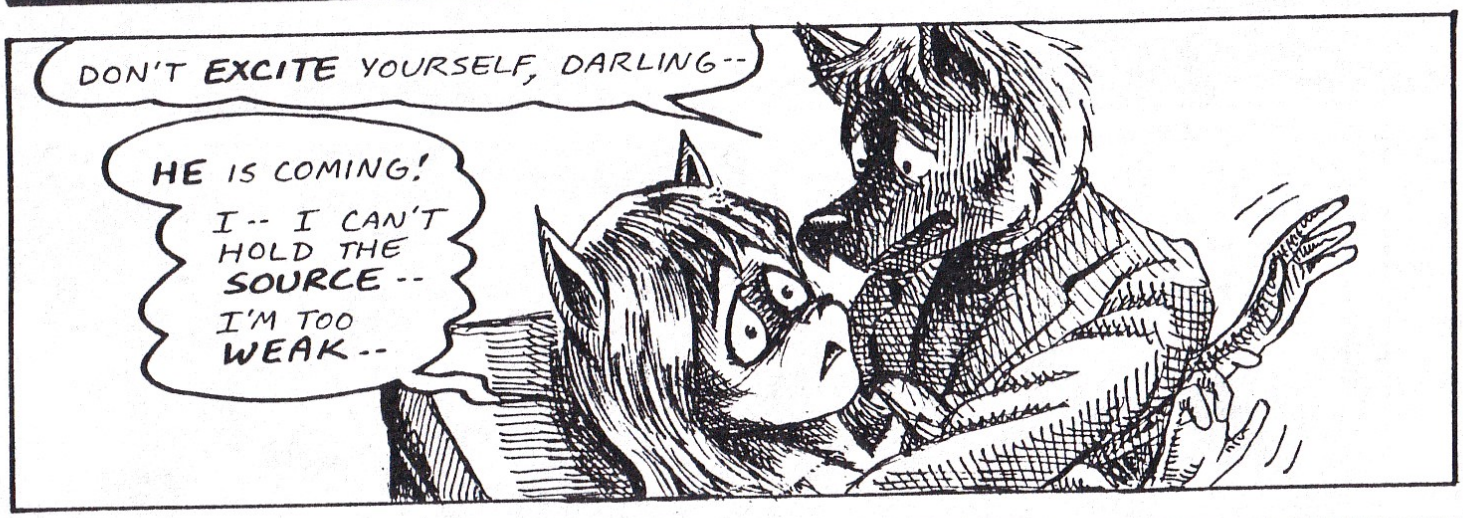

FOOOSSH!

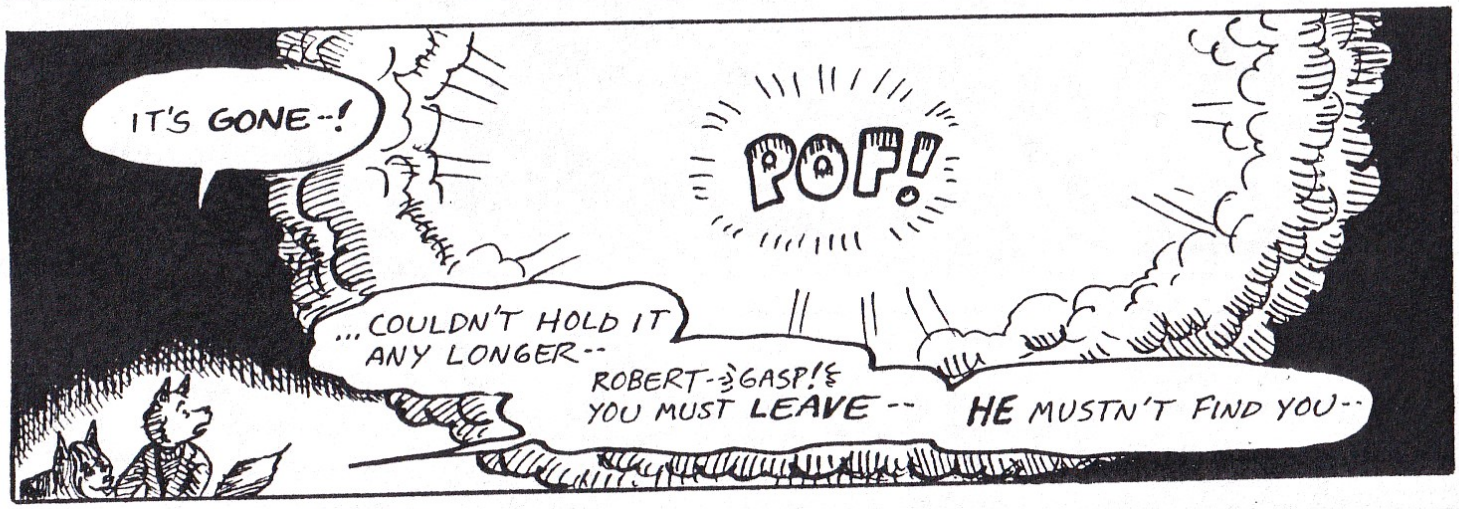

WE'VE ARRIVED RIGHT IN THE CENTER OF THE CITY--!
GOOD!
SPROING!


SPREAD OUT! MY DEVICE INDICATES THAT THE SOURCE IS NEARBY--! FIND MARIANA!!

YES... THE SOURCE IS NEAR-- BUT THE SIGNAL IS SO WEAK...
HMMM...


ROBERT-- I FEEL... OH!
HE IS COMING--!
- WHAT?

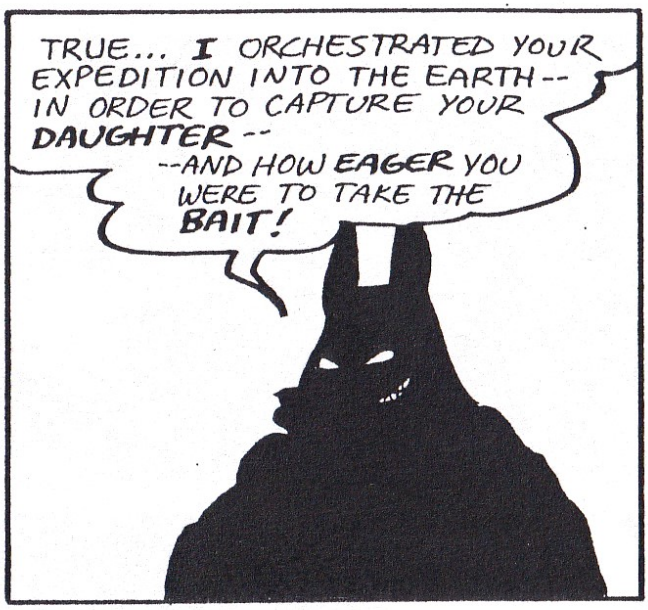

DON'T EXCITE YOURSELF, DARLING--
HE IS COMING!
I-- I CAN'T HOLD THE SOURCE-- I'M TOO WEAK--

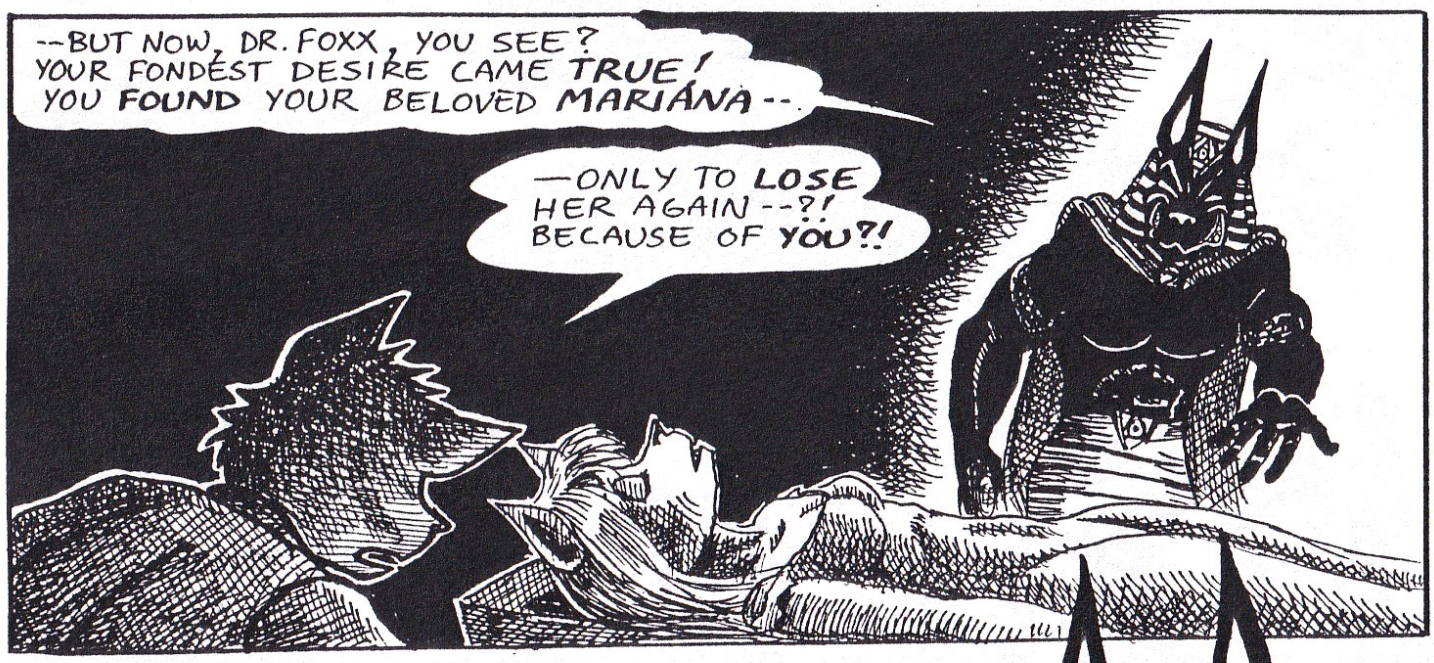

IT'S GONE--!
POF!
...COULDN'T HOLD IT ANY LONGER--
ROBERT--GASP! YOU MUST LEAVE--
HE MUSTN'T FIND YOU--

I'M... SLIPPING AWAY...
MARIANA--!
- NO!

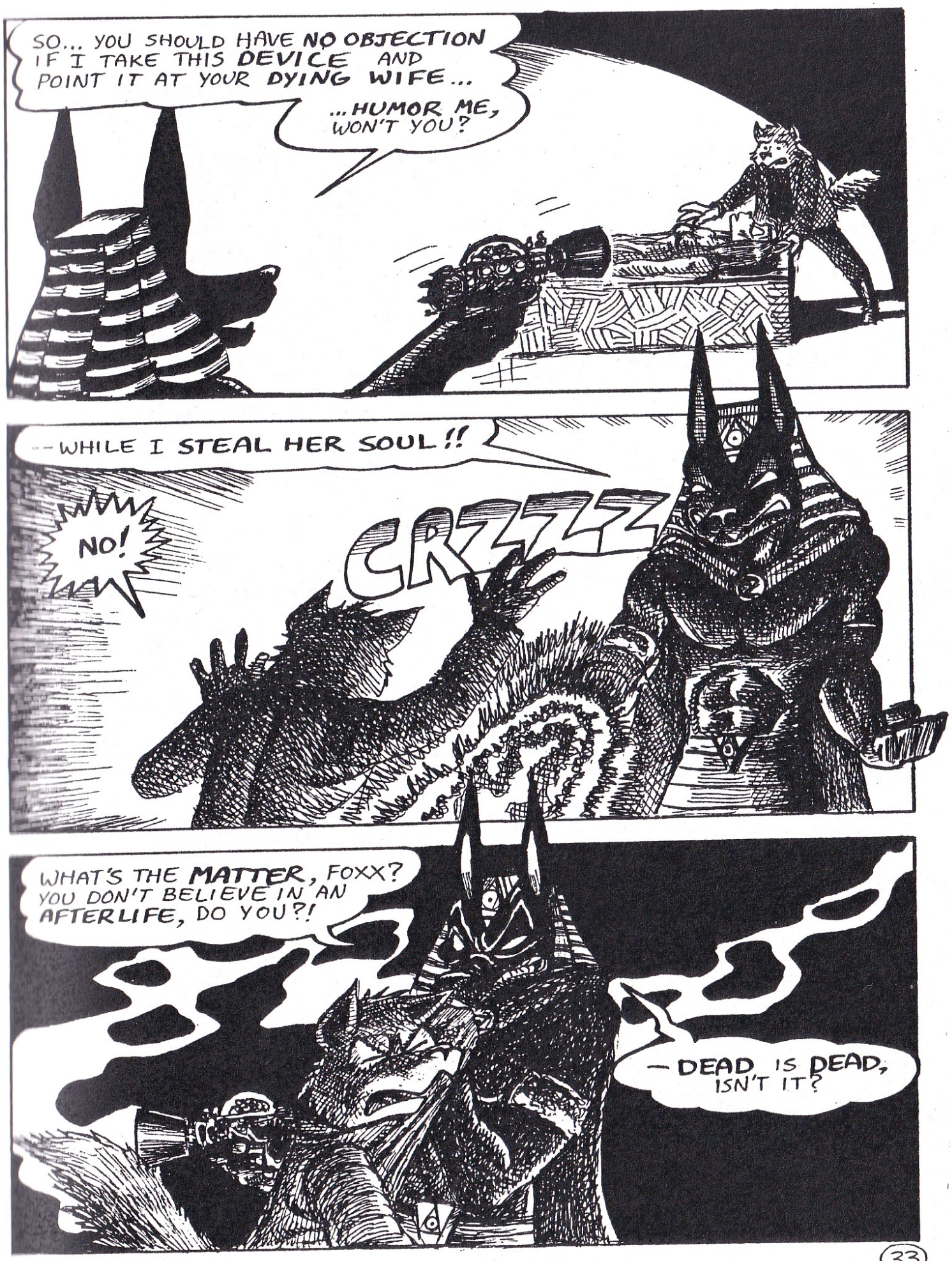
I LOVE YOU... ROBERT... REMEMBER...
THOUGH WE MAY PART FOR A LITTLE WHILE...
...EVENTUALLY WE WILL BE REUNITED -- AND THEN..
...THEN WE WILL BE TOGETHER...
FOREVER...
HOW TOUCHING!
WHAT?
SHOULD I INTRODUCE MYSELF?
YOU MAY CALL ME... MASTER!
CLOUT!

GASP! FIEND! YOU CAUSED ALL THIS! YOU'RE THE MONSTER BEHIND EVERYTHING!


TRUE... I ORCHESTRATED YOUR EXPEDITION INTO THE EARTH-- IN ORDER TO CAPTURE YOUR DAUGHTER-- --AND HOW EAGER YOU WERE TO TAKE THE BAIT!


--BUT NOW, DR. FOXX, YOU SEE? YOUR FONDEST DESIRE CAME TRUE! YOU FOUND YOUR BELOVED MARIANA--
—ONLY TO LOSE HER AGAIN--?! BECAUSE OF YOU?!

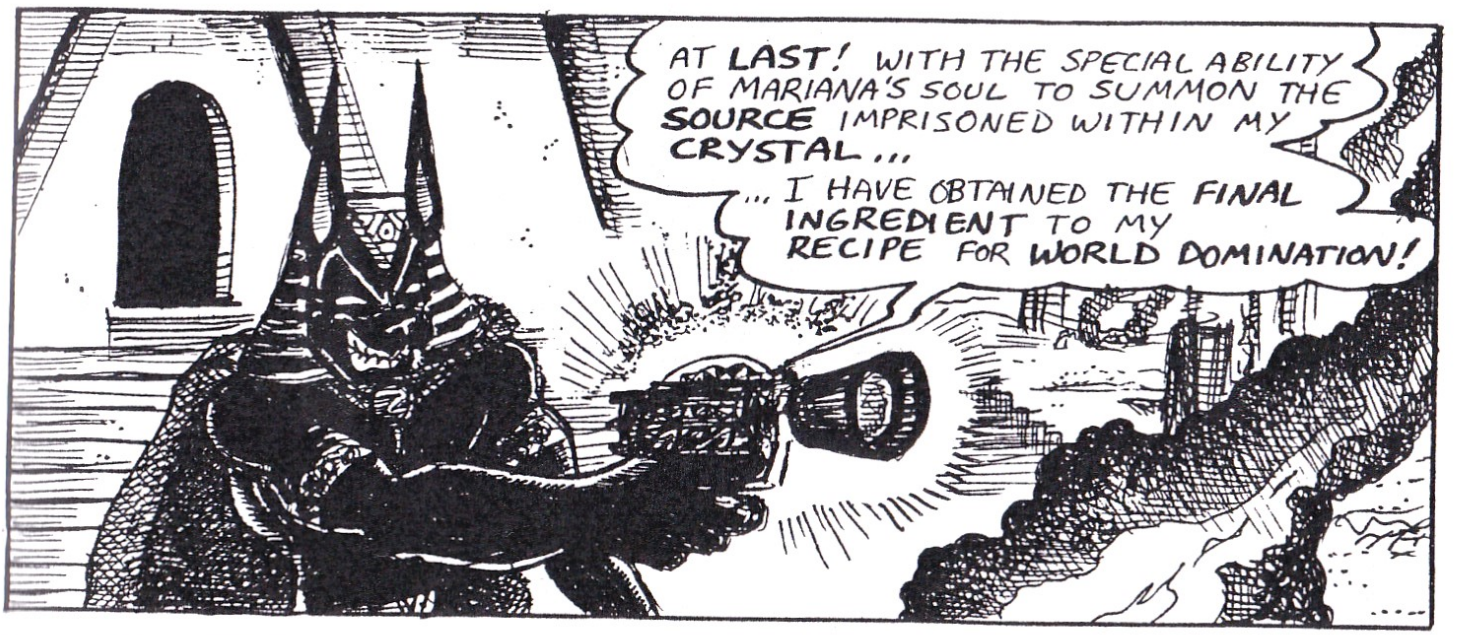
LIFE IS CRUEL, DR. FOXX--! LIFE IS SWEET, INTENSE, AND BRIEF-- AND WHEN IT'S OVER, ... WELL... WHEN IT'S OVER, THAT'S IT, ISN'T IT? JUST EMPTY, VELVETY BLACKNESS -- IN WHICH PAIN NO LONGER ENDURES--! BUT... YOU KNEW THAT, DIDN'T YOU?
YOU DON'T BELIEVE IN ANYTHING AS INSUBSTANTIAL AS...
—THE SOUL, DO YOU--?

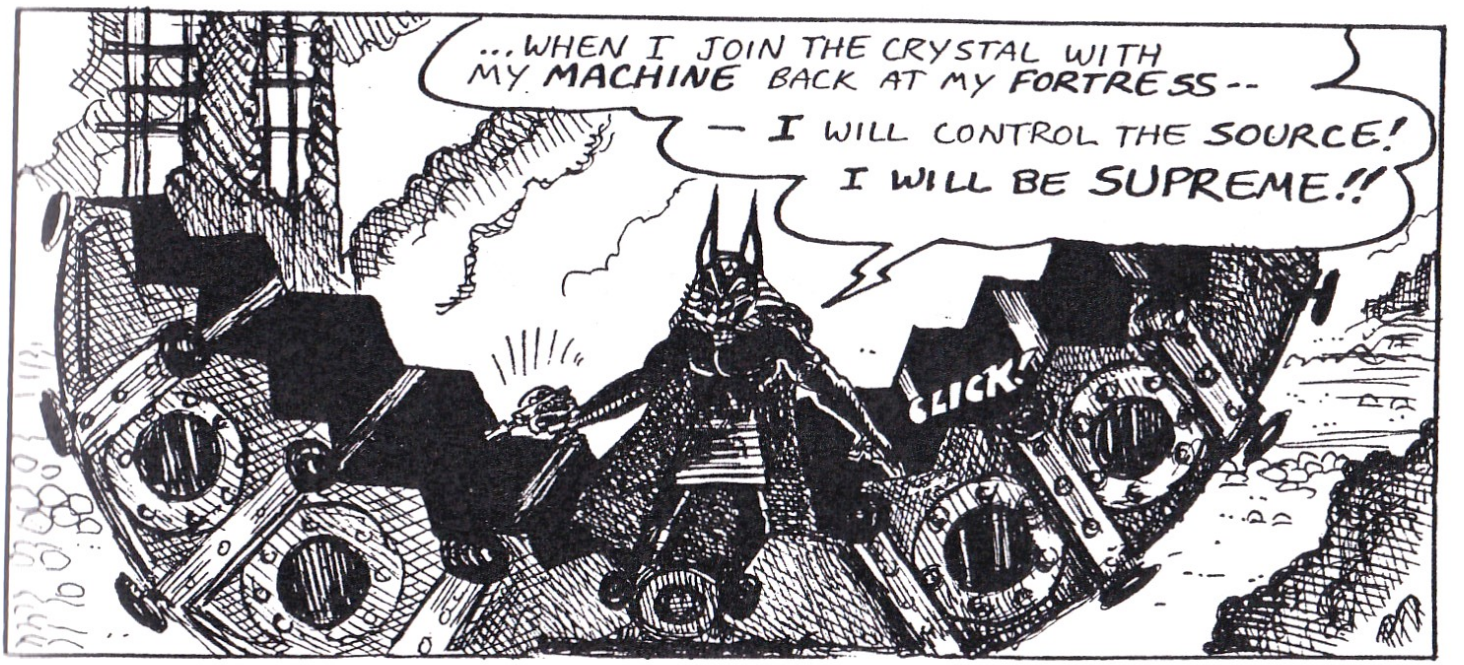

SO... YOU SHOULD HAVE NO OBJECTION IF I TAKE THIS DEVICE AND POINT IT AT YOUR DYING WIFE...
...HUMOR ME, WON'T YOU?
--WHILE I STEAL HER SOUL!!
NO!
CRZZZZ
WHAT'S THE MATTER, FOXX? YOU DON'T BELIEVE IN AN AFTERLIFE, DO YOU?!
—DEAD IS DEAD, ISN'T IT?

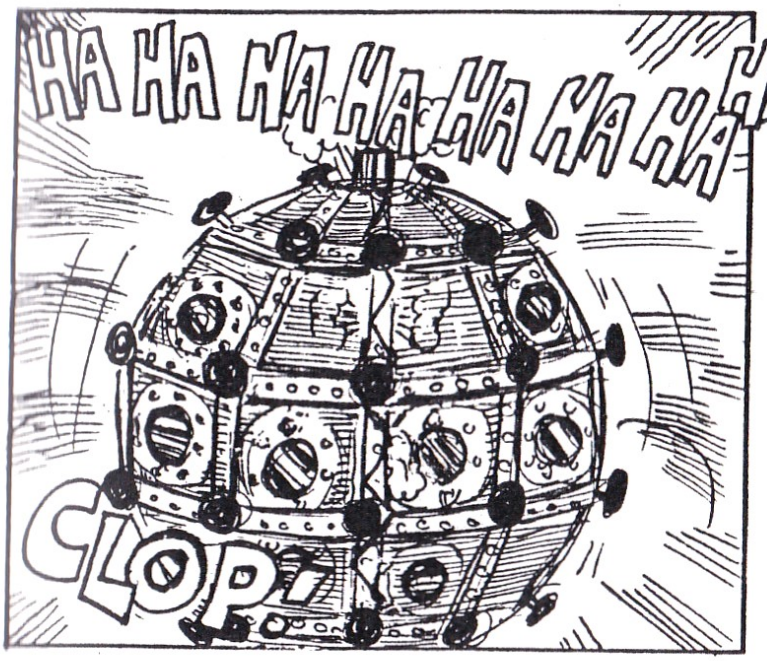
YOU'RE PATHETIC, FOXX!
--NOT EVEN WORTH MY POWER TO TRANSFORM YOU!

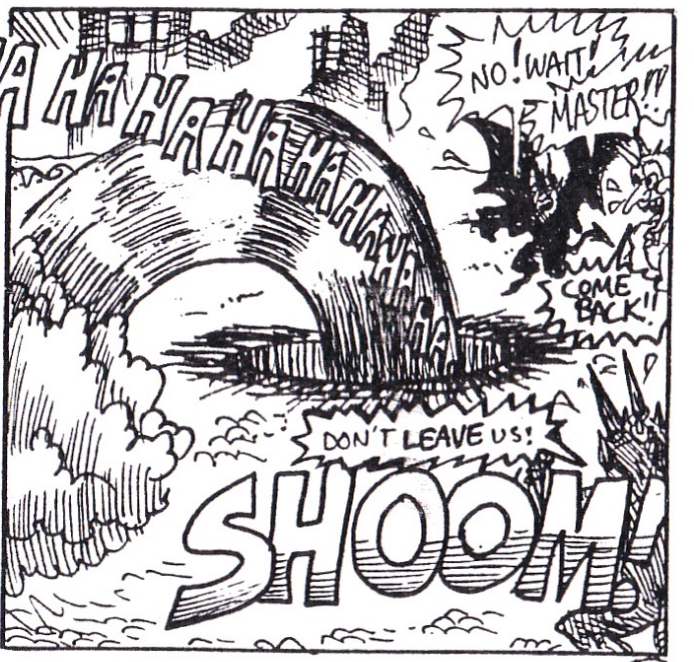
I COULDN'T PUNISH YOU ANY MORE THAN YOU WILL, YOURSELF!
—JOIN YOUR WIFE!
UGH!
WHUMP!

GASP!
I HAVE WHAT I WANT!! HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA !!

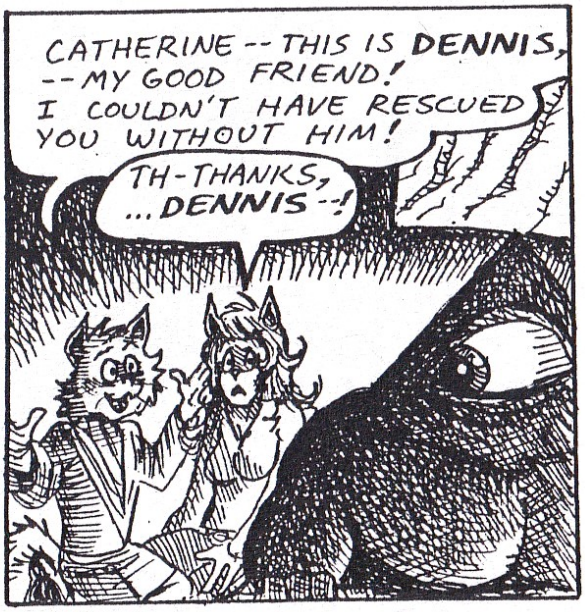

AT LAST! WITH THE SPECIAL ABILITY OF MARIANA'S SOUL TO SUMMON THE SOURCE IMPRISONED WITHIN MY CRYSTAL...
... I HAVE OBTAINED THE FINAL INGREDIENT TO MY RECIPE FOR WORLD DOMINATION!

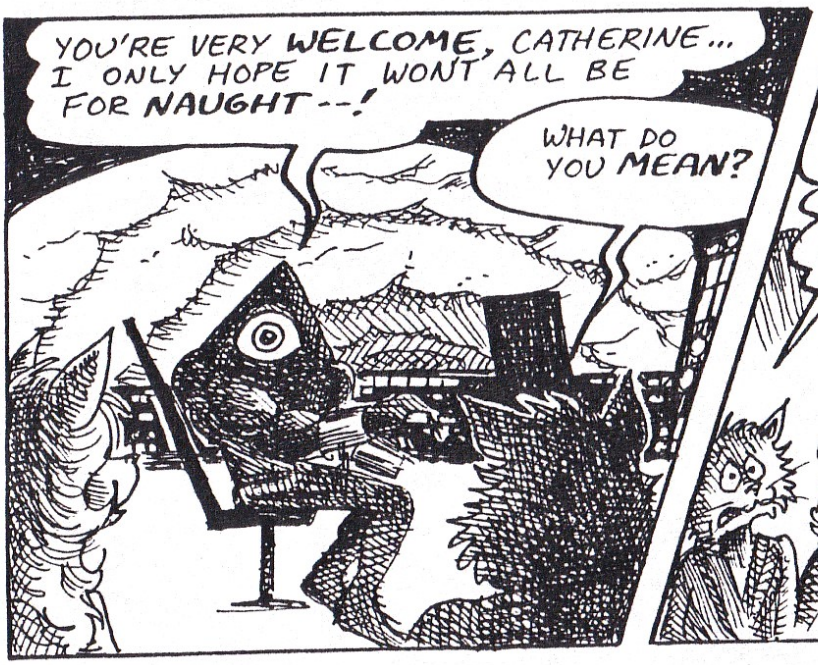

...WHEN I JOIN THE CRYSTAL WITH MY MACHINE BACK AT MY FORTRESS--
— I WILL CONTROL THE SOURCE! I WILL BE SUPREME!!
CLICK!

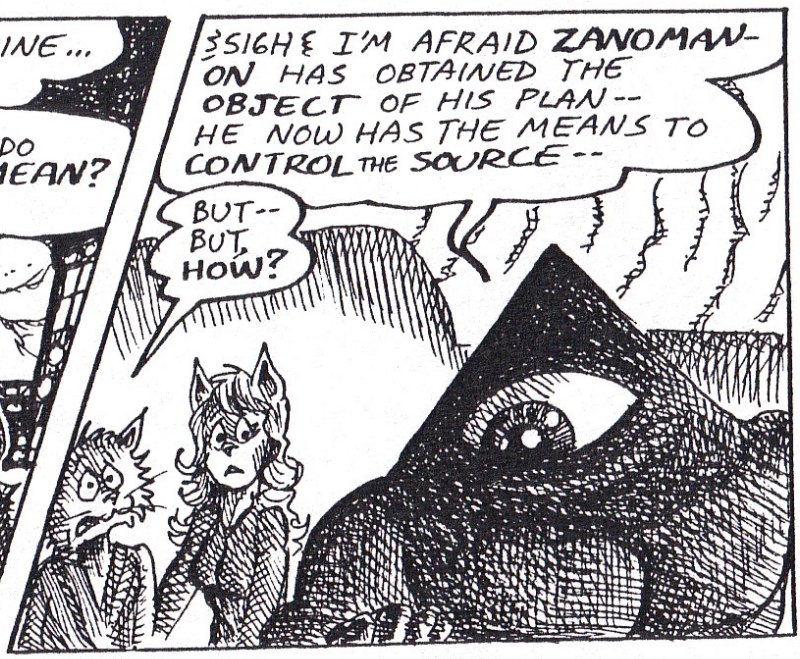

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
CLOP!

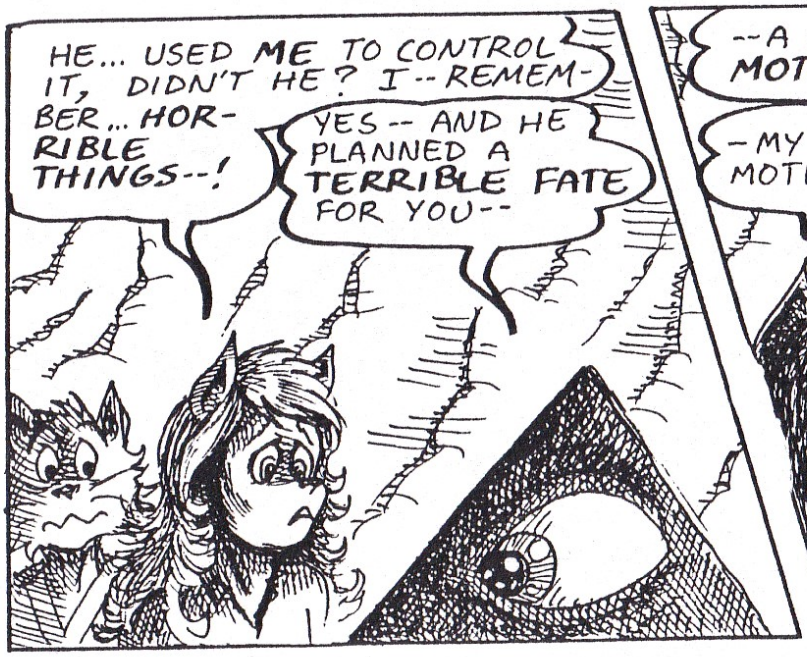

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
NO! WAIT! MASTER!!
COME BACK!!
DON'T LEAVE US!
SHOOM!

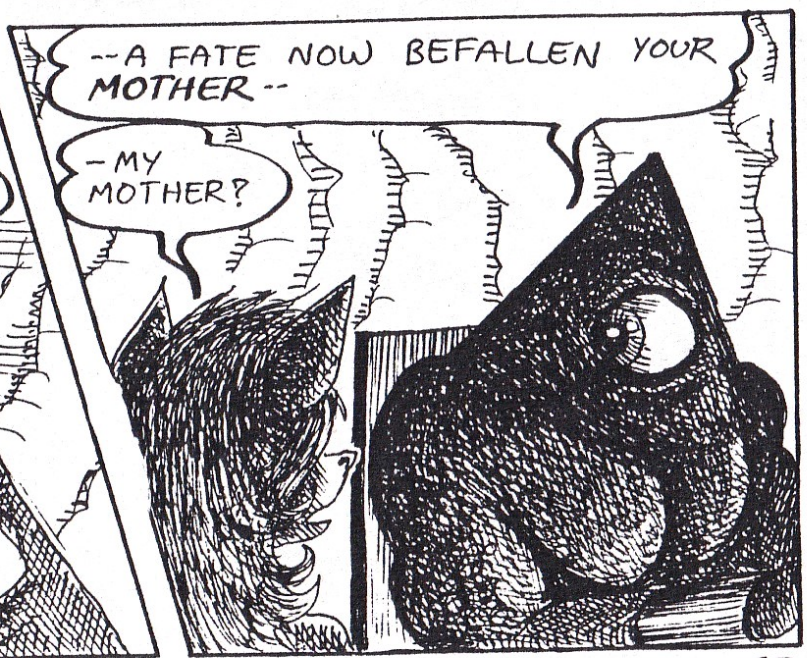
MEANWHILE...
OH, WALTER -- IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE YOU --
YEAH...

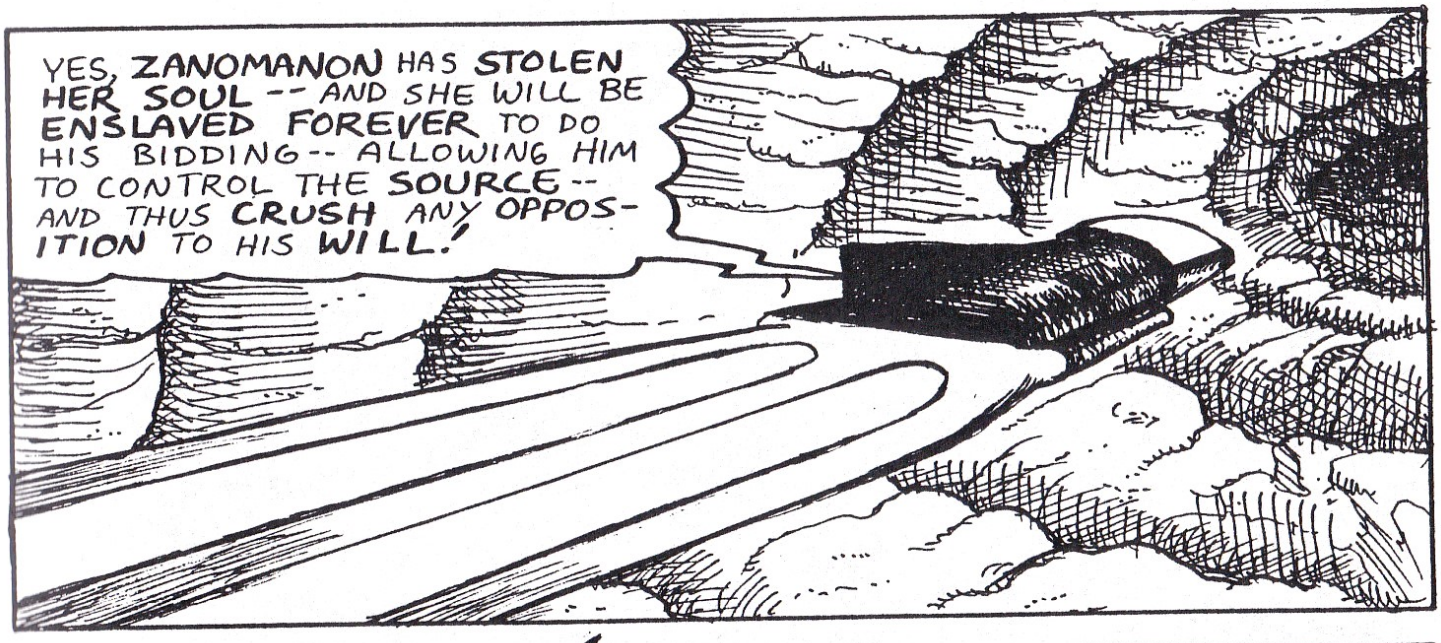

CATHERINE -- THIS IS DENNIS, -- MY GOOD FRIEND! I COULDN'T HAVE RESCUED YOU WITHOUT HIM!
TH-THANKS, ...DENNIS --!

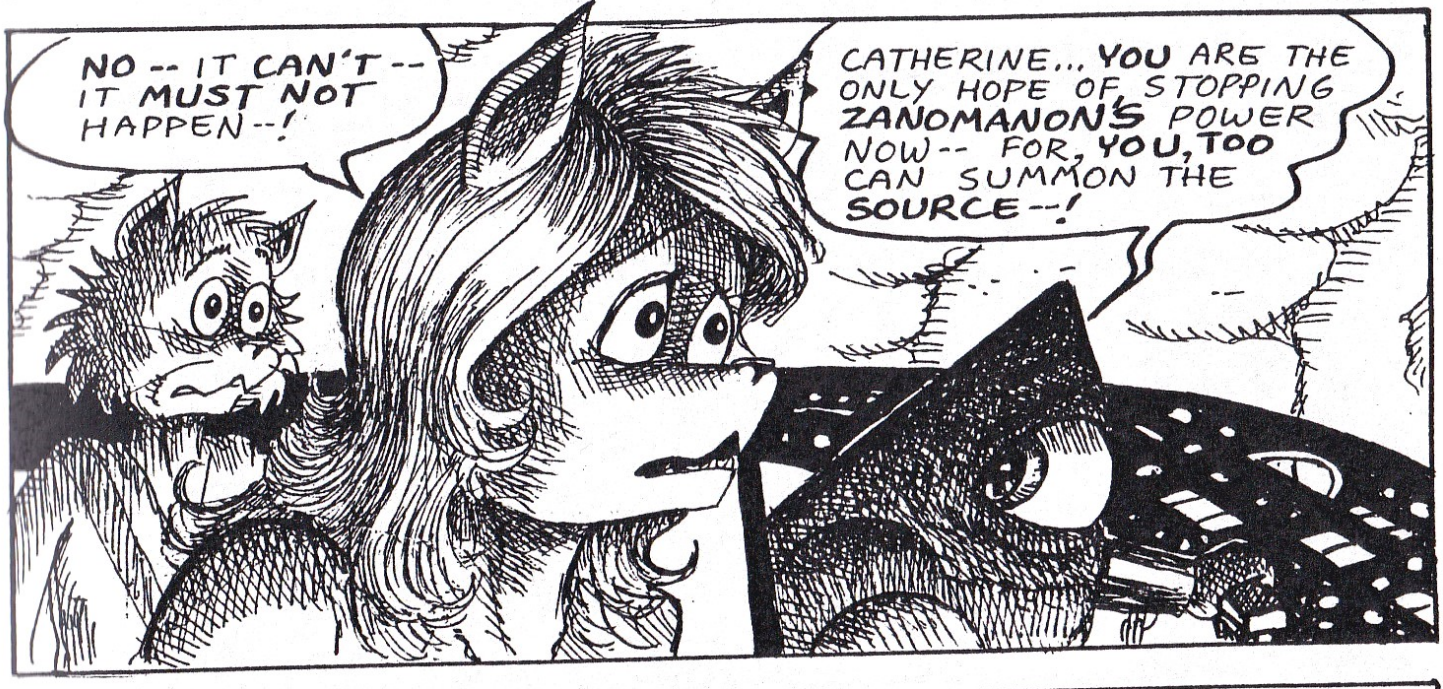

YOU'RE VERY WELCOME, CATHERINE... I ONLY HOPE IT WONT ALL BE FOR NAUGHT --!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?


SIGH & I'M AFRAID ZANOMAWON HAS OBTAINED THE OBJECT OF HIS PLAN -- HE NOW HAS THE MEANS TO CONTROL THE SOURCE --
BUT -- BUT, HOW?

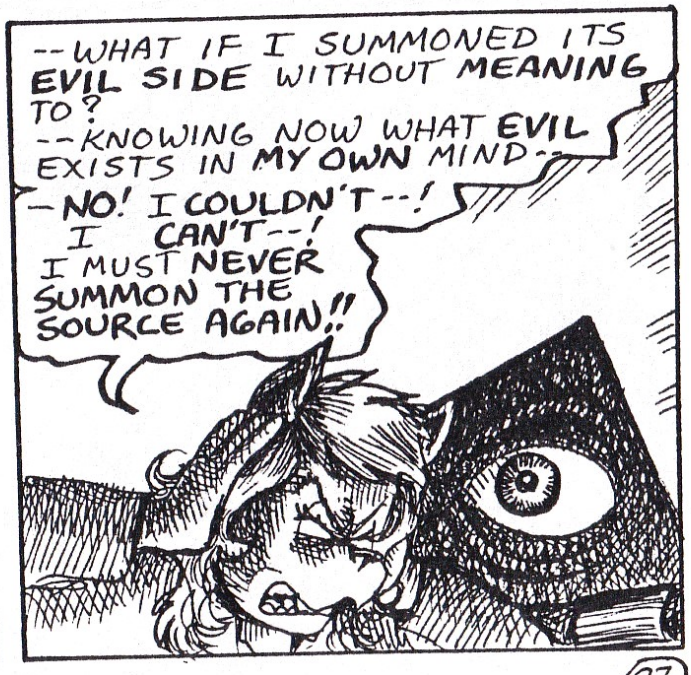

HE... USED ME TO CONTROL IT, DIDN'T HE? I -- REMEMBER... HORRIBLE THINGS --!
YES -- AND HE PLANNED A TERRIBLE FATE FOR YOU --

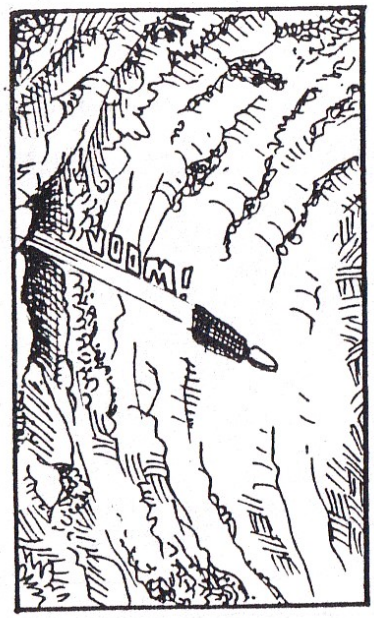

-- A FATE NOW BEFALLEN YOUR MOTHER --
-MY MOTHER?

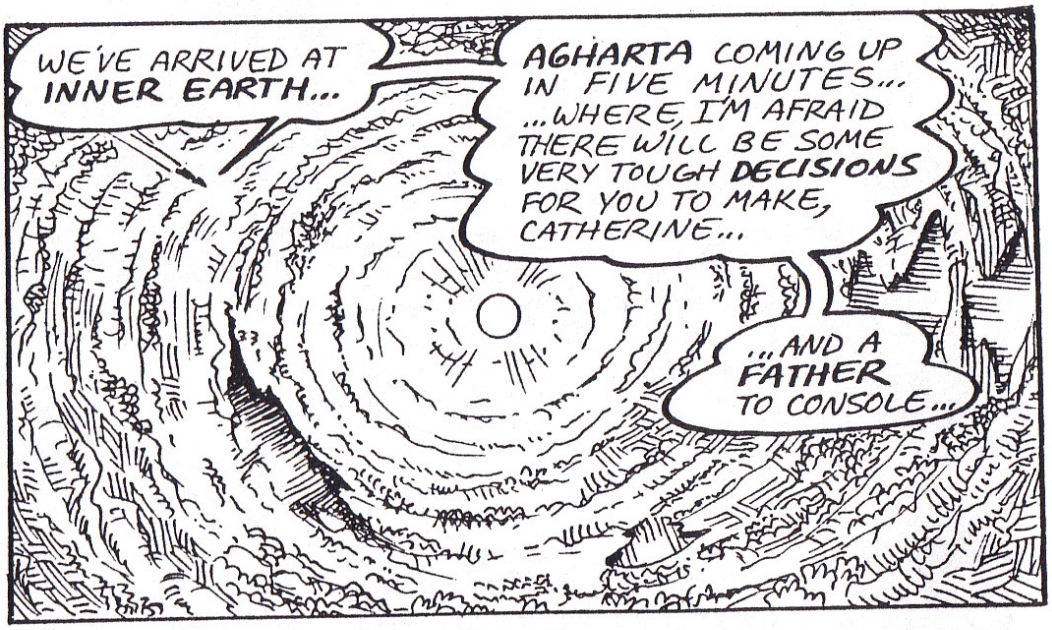

YES, ZANOMANON HAS STOLEN HER SOUL -- AND SHE WILL BE ENSLAVED FOREVER TO DO HIS BIDDING -- ALLOWING HIM TO CONTROL THE SOURCE -- AND THUS CRUSH ANY OPPOSITION TO HIS WILL!

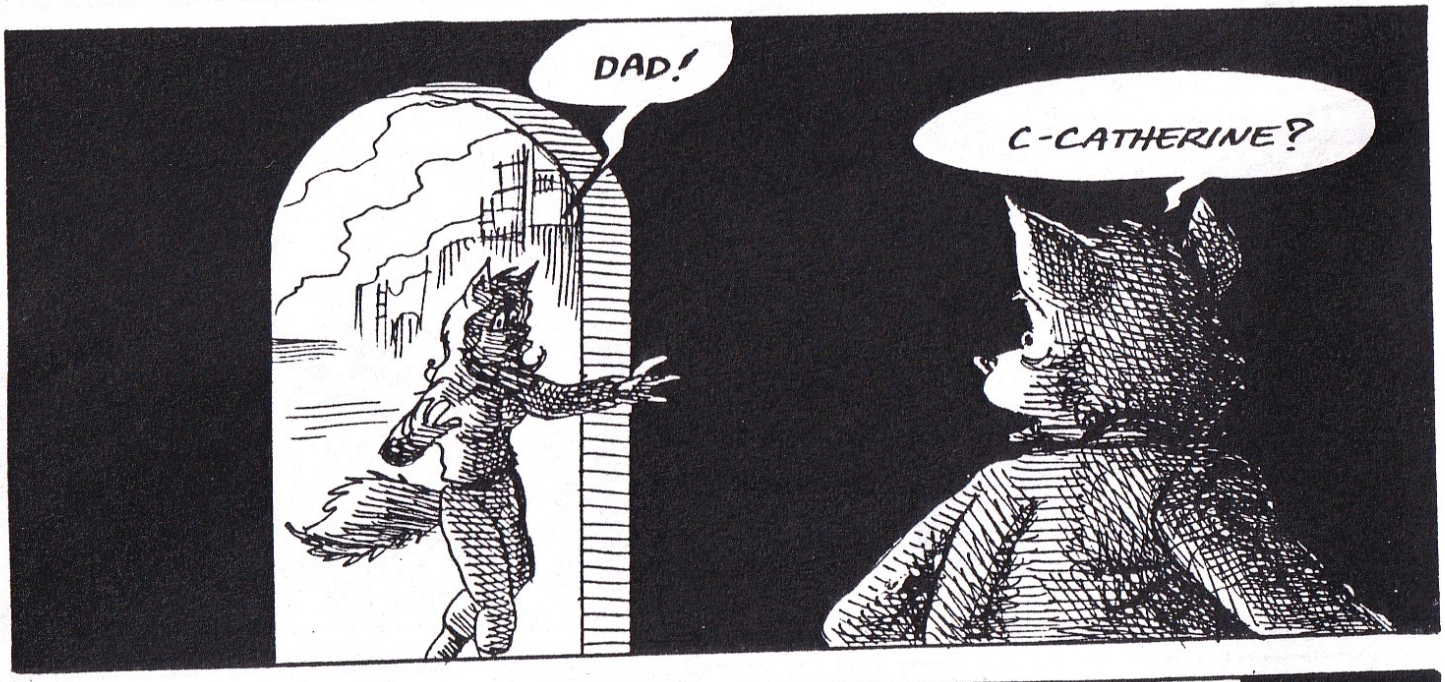

NO -- IT CAN'T -- IT MUST NOT HAPPEN --!
CATHERINE... YOU ARE THE ONLY HOPE OF STOPPING ZANOMANON'S POWER NOW -- FOR, YOU, TOO CAN SUMMON THE SOURCE --!

I -- DON'T KNOW... AFTER ALL THE TERRIBLE THINGS I WAS FORCED TO MAKE THE SOURCE DO... MY... MY MIND RECOILS AT THE THOUGHT OF EVER SUMMONING IT AGAIN --!


-- WHAT IF I SUMMONED ITS EVIL SIDE WITHOUT MEANING TO? -- KNOWING NOW WHAT EVIL EXISTS IN MY OWN MIND --
-- NO! I COULDN'T --! I CAN'T --! I MUST NEVER SUMMON THE SOURCE AGAIN!!


VOOM!


WE'VE ARRIVED AT INNER EARTH...
AGHARTA COMING UP IN FIVE MINUTES... ...WHERE, I'M AFRAID THERE WILL BE SOME VERY TOUGH DECISIONS FOR YOU TO MAKE, CATHERINE...
...AND A FATHER TO CONSOLE...


DAD!
C-CATHERINE?

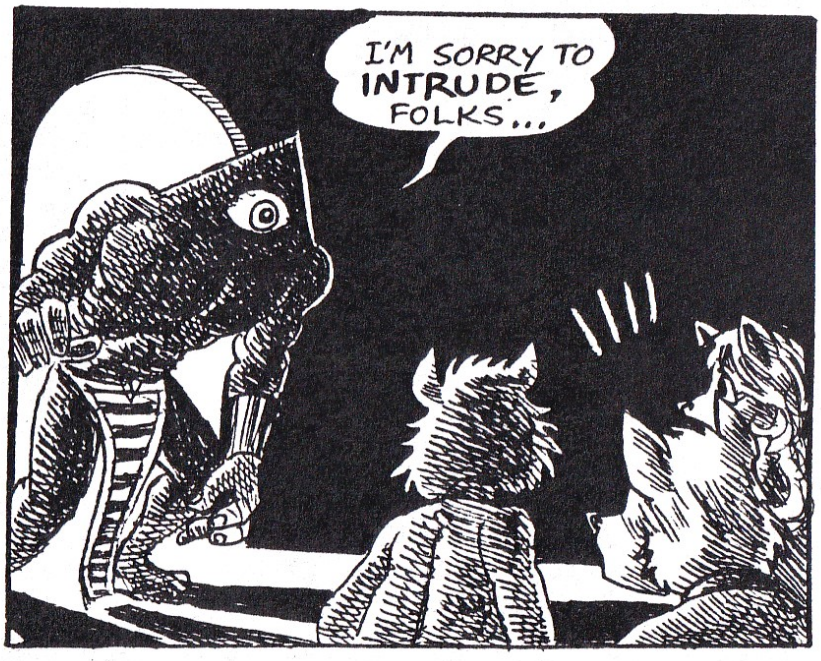
CATHERINE-- CAN IT REALLY BE YOU?

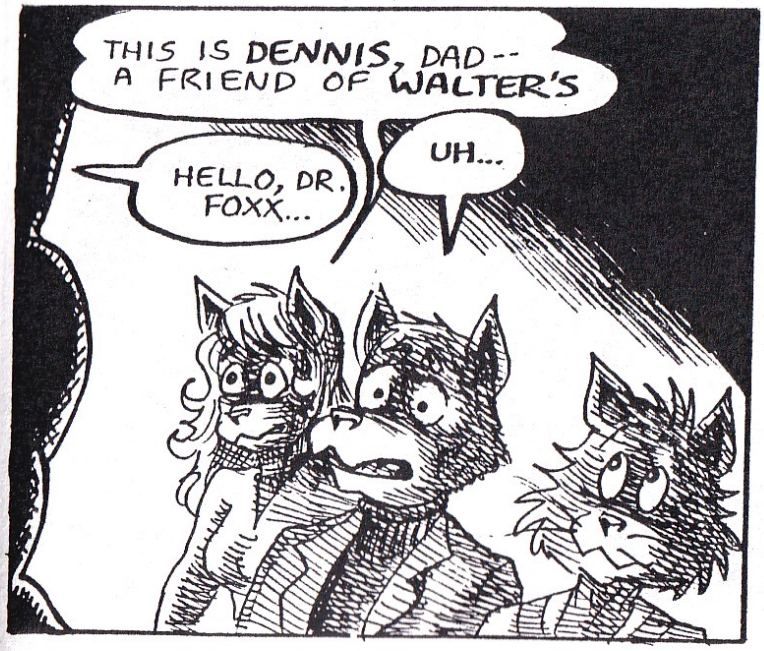
DAD... I HEARD WHAT HAPPENED...
SHE... SHE'S... GONE...
I'VE LOST HER...
...AGAIN--

I'M SO SORRY...

WALTER--! YOU'RE HERE TOO!
SNIF

WALTER SAVED ME, DAD! FROM ZANOMANON HIMSELF!
AW! (BLUSH!)
IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU, LAD!


I'M SORRY TO INTRUDE, FOLKS...


THIS IS DENNIS, DAD-- A FRIEND OF WALTER'S
HELLO, DR. FOXX...
UH...

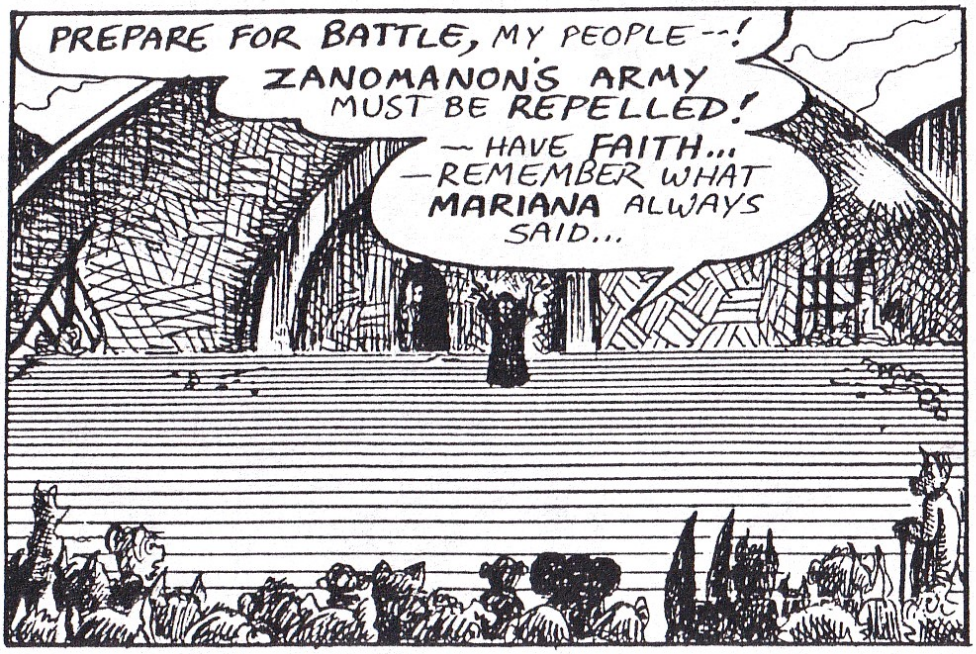
...THE ARMY OF BOOTS THAT ZANOMANON LEFT OUT THERE IS APPROACHING...

ZANOMANON'S GIVEN ORDERS TO ATTACK -- AND WIPE OUT EVERY LIVING CREATURE IN AGHARTA!

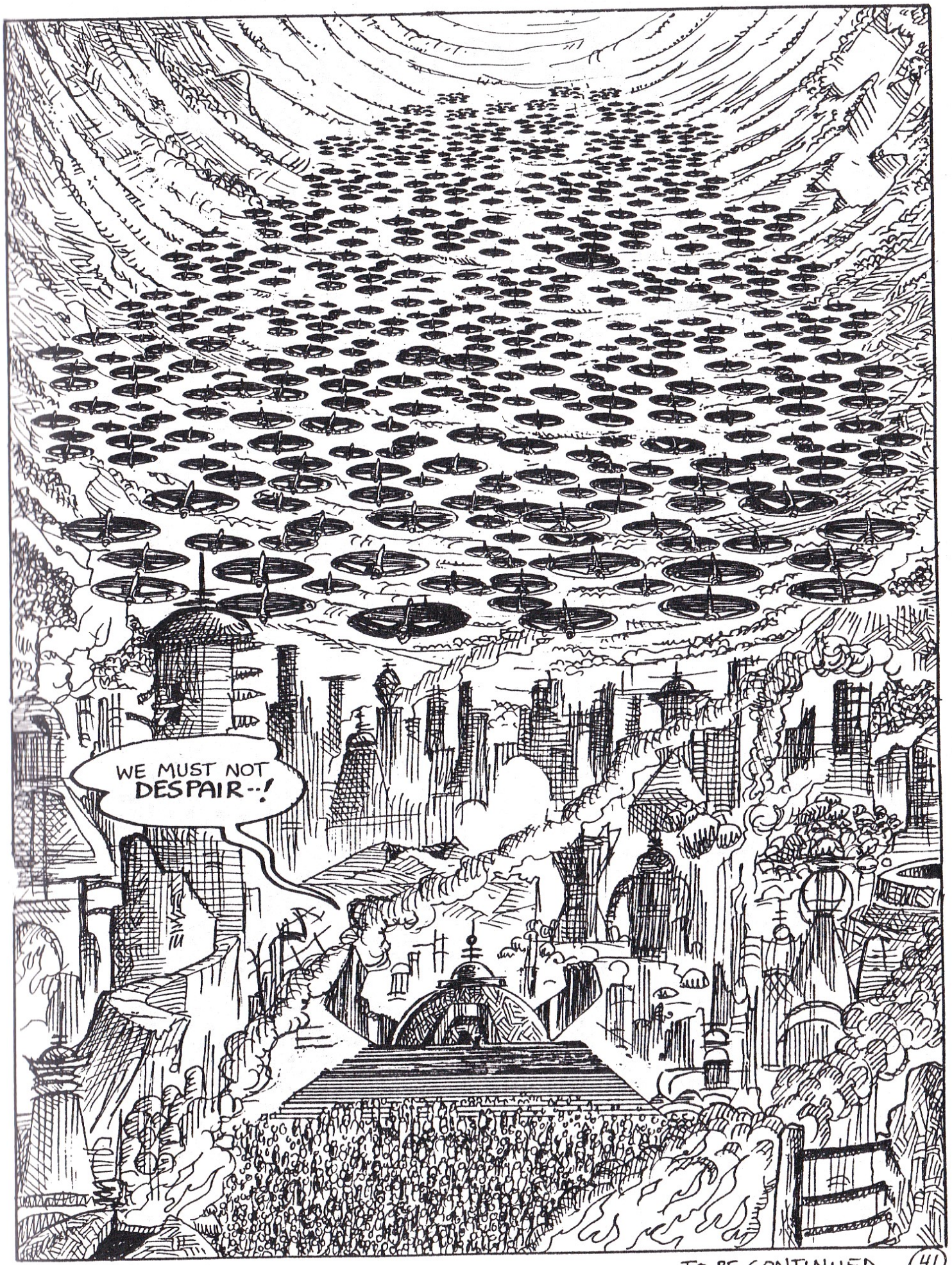
THEY SHALL MEET WITH RESISTANCE...!

MY PEOPLE ARE CAPABLE OF DEFENDING THEMSELVES -- --AND FIGHTING HAND TO HAND, NOW THAT IT COMES TO THAT!

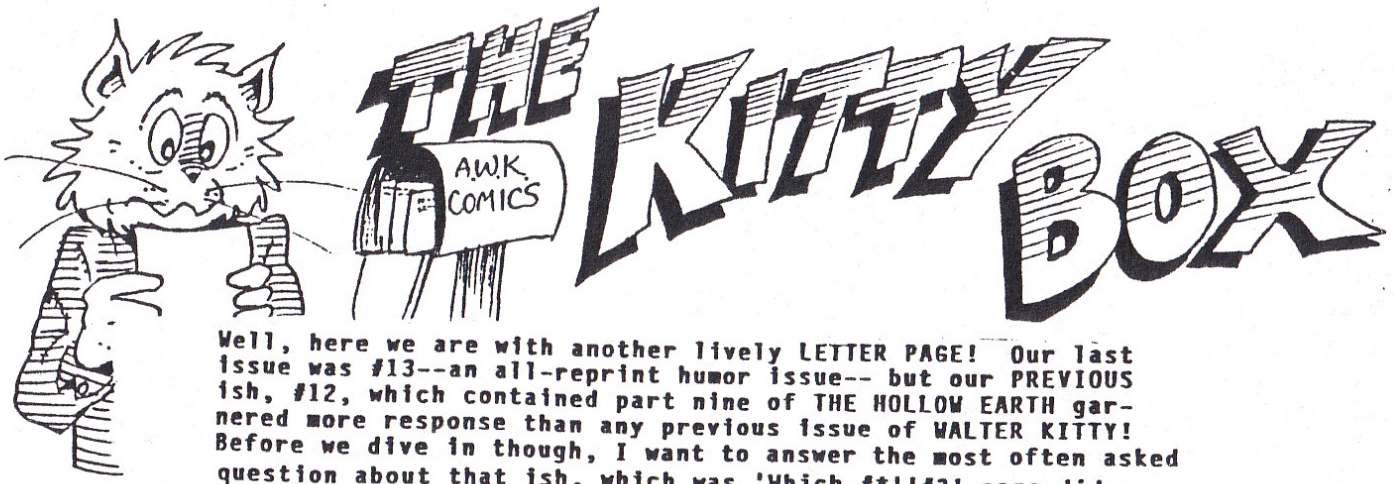
WHAT NOW, DENNIS? DO THEY HAVE A CHANCE?
THERE'S ALWAYS A CHANCE, WALTER... THOUGH, I'LL ADMIT... THE ODDS AREN'T GOOD...!


PREPARE FOR BATTLE, MY PEOPLE --! ZANOMANON'S ARMY MUST BE REPELLED!
— HAVE FAITH... —REMEMBER WHAT MARIANA ALWAYS SAID...

EACH ONE OF US CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE-
THE LEAST AMONG US MAY WIN THE DAY--!



TO BE CONTINUED...



Well, here we are with another lively LETTER PAGE! Our last issue was #13--an all-reprint humor issue-- but our PREVIOUS ish, #12, which contained part nine of THE HOLLOW EARTH garnered more response than any previous issue of WALTER KITTY! Before we dive in though, I want to answer the most often asked question about that ish, which was,'Which #*!!#?! page did your wife ink?'--OK!OK!--Laura inked page 13 of that ish-- and a great job she did, too. Not one person who commented on it could tell which one it was! So there! And now, letters!

Dear Mark:

I'm quite happy with(W.K.) 11-12. Top-notch pulp adventure, packed with action. Poor sad-eyed Mariana. Zanomanon is as satisfyingly fiendish as, say, Fu Manchu, gloating in excellent megalomaniacal fashion, and the battle of good and evil is full of good images. Fine drawing, particularly the covers; I wish I could have seen it at the full size you originally intended. I take it the splash page of #12 is from earlier days? Everything else in these issues is distinctly better.

And the problems of causality and guilt in #12 are well presented, with no cut-and-dried answer given; I like that.

The one thing I regret is the bombast on page 31 of #12:'There is one thing that you will **never** equal in me--simply because of your **nature** --and that is my determination...my **resolve--to never let you win!!**' This is not in accord with the traditions; the villain is supposed to brag like this. Why should good be any more resolute than evil? Yes, minor opponents can be exposed as bullies that collapse in the face of firm opposition, but the lasting villains are made of sterner stuff.

Letter columns:...I agree about not letting self-consciousness creep into the narrative. Two places where I felt pushed out of the story are in Zanomanon's gloating over his comic books--funny, but surely out of character--and Walter's saying 'Sorry, folks' when he's restored to his body but naked. That sort of thing goes fine in silly comics, but I don't think it's a good idea in a **story**. How can we care about the fates of characters who keep reminding us that they're just lines on paper? Fortunately, you do it seldom--once every forty pages or so isn't bad.

I also disagree with James Carlson's complaint about the mushroom-eating; it's pretty clear that mushrooms aren't doing the work, Dennis/Mendel is. Cute idea, making the sequence fall in a removable insert, but I suspect any parent who felt the need to censor wouldn't realize that the job could be done neatly. I sure didn't, until I read your comment.

So when's #13 coming out? I'm not quite as eager as Jules Verne, but I'm certainly looking forward to it.

Always carry a grapefruit,
Philip M. Cohen
White Plains NY

Thanks for your thoughts, Philip. You're right about the splash page in #12 being an earlier effort. I had intended to have a redrawn version of the same poster in that ish, but I hadn't finished it by the time I went to press. It appears as this issue's splash. As for the good Source's bombastic bragging--why should evil be the only one to have a good old egotistical rant? Also, at that point, Mariana had been injured, and the Source would have done anything to keep the evil side off-balance, and protect its mistress.

You're probably right about the off-the-wall humor I throw in every once in a while being distracting... I try to keep my self-concious gags under reign, but sometimes I just can't resist deflating the more pompous moments... And as you know by now, W.K. #13 was last issue's all-humor story reprints from earlier issues. Talk about silly...

(Letters Continued)

Dear Mark:

Thanks for the issues of WALTER KITTY. They were much better than I expected, although I had rather high expectations after reading Lex Nakashima's review in THE EVERCHANGING PALACE. If anything, his review was too brief to convey the richness of your created world. I don't know where to begin myself--but I think my favorite aspect of your work is the way you write your characters. You have the ability to breathe life into cartoonish looking characters that actually come to seem real-- the personalities of Walter, Mariana, Dr. Foxx, and Dennis especially appeal to me. Having read comics for my entire life, I find very few comics these days that can make me care for the characters in them, much less funny animal characters. Your writing stands head and shoulders above any of the funny animal comics I'm aware of that are currently being printed. Another aspect of WALTER KITTY that impresses me is the obvious work you've put into the plot.- This story is really going someplace, and it's evident you have a definite end in mind, which is one of the things I find so lacking in other independent Funny Animal comics. So many of them seem to get bogged down in the self consciousness of dealing with people who are animals. That, or they just concentrate on the sexually titillating aspects, and that's the whole point. Well, I want a good **story** dammit! I want something more than a few slice-of-life vignettes in a universe of animal people. Your characters and story are interwoven, much like the stories of Carl Barks, so that their personalities **cause** things to happen, becomming a realistic and satisfying motivation for the rather unrealistic events and actions that take place.

The buildup is impressive. I can't wait to see what it's all leading up to. I have the feeling that some heavy things are going to befall your little cast. Can you believe I really **care** which one of your characters dies? Please don't let it be Dr. Foxx.

I look forward to issue #13! Keep up the great work!

A Walter Kitty Fan,

Donna Conrad
Boston, Mass

WHOAH! Such praise! I love it! I just hope the climax of the story pleases you as much as the buildup. Thanx for the kind words.

Incidentally, Lex Nakashima's review of WK #10 was responsible for widening the scope of my readership considerably. We now have people all over the U.S. reading Walter Kitty... today, America-- tomorrow, the world!! Gott in Himmel!!

Dear "Uncle" Mark;

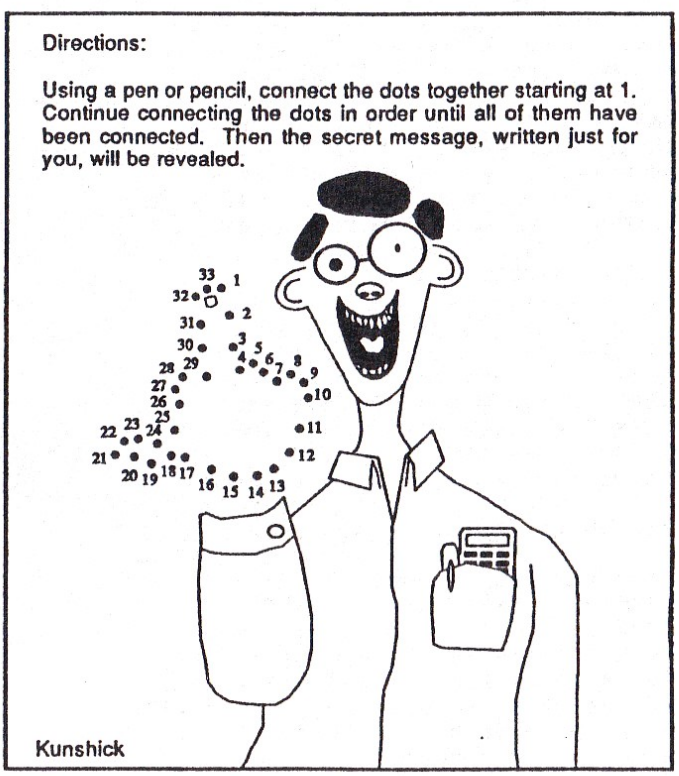
Ick! THE HOLLOW EARTH is getting 'way too serious. I was much happier with the straight humorous adventure stuff you were doing in the earlier issues. Now the comic is bogged down in all this metaphysical crap with stealing souls and whether or not there's an afterlife. Sorry, but I've gotten to the point where I don't even **care** who lives or dies in your story. Let me know when you finish up THE HOLLOW EARTH, and maybe I'll come back to the fold. Right now, it's just too damn melodramatic to be entertaining!

Sincerely,
Ron Laross
Austin, Tx

Whoah! Such non-praise! No sir, I don't like it! Oh well, I guess you can't please everyone.

See you after the next two issues!

The following cartoon, by my friend Roger Kunshick probably expresses my feelings right about now...



Kiddie Korner

Dear Mark,

Thanks very much for the package of WALTER KITTYS. ...I've enjoyed them all. There is a noticeable improvement in quality from the earliest to the most recent issues, but the early ones aren't bad. You started off good and you've gotten better. The early stories show influences of both Carl Barks and H.P. Lovecraft, which is quite a combination to blend together as smoothly as you did.

...For the last ten years...I've been collecting independent/small-press funny-animal comics and fanzines such as ALBEDO, RHUDIPRRT and YARF!; all of whom seem to refer sooner or later to most of the good publications in the field-- but I haven't found out about WALTER KITTY until just now. This makes me feel that there are hundreds of more fans who don't know about WALTER KITTY yet who will also go wild about it and want to get the entire HOLLOW EARTH story when they discover it. You could just reprint your old issues, as you did with W.K. #1, but a better alternative might be to revise the early pages and try to get the whole novel published in a new format with wider distribution. There are several small independent comics publishers that seem interested in funny-animal adventure comics, such as Antarctic Press in San Antonio, and MU Press in Seattle; maybe one of them would be interested.

I'll look forward to getting future issues of W.K. when they're ready..(and hope) that there will be a new, larger edition of THE HOLLOW EARTH to justify the work to improve it.

Sincerely,

Fred Patten
Culver City, CA

I hope so too, Fred! Strangely, not long after hearing from you, I got a call from Brian Sutton who is one of the editors of Antarctic's FURRLOUGH, and their new F.A. title, WILDLIFE. He asked if I'd be interested in contributing to one of their books-- so I am currently working on a brand new 36-page Walter Kitty story, to be published in 3 12-page chapters in one of their upcoming issues.

As for a revised edition of THE HOLLOW EARTH, well, nothing would please me more. Who knows what could happen in the future? If the story I do for Antarctic gets a good response from readers, there's every possibility that they might see their way clear to produce THE HOLLOW EARTH as a 12-issue miniseries-- or even give Walter his own comic! Just thinking about it fairly makes me swoon!

Incidentally, as well as publishing his own zine, ROWRBRAZZLE, Fred also writes comic stories. He has a couple of them coming up in Steve Gallacci's ALBEDO--a page of one which he sent me looks really nice--with beautiful Terrie Smith artwork. Wowzers!

Dear Mark:

Thanks for sending me Walter Kitty#11. My God, how have you been keeping this a secret (at least from me and most of the east coast)? It's a great zine. Nice backgrounds, great character designs and a really fun villain. What issue are you up to now? I gotta get the rest.

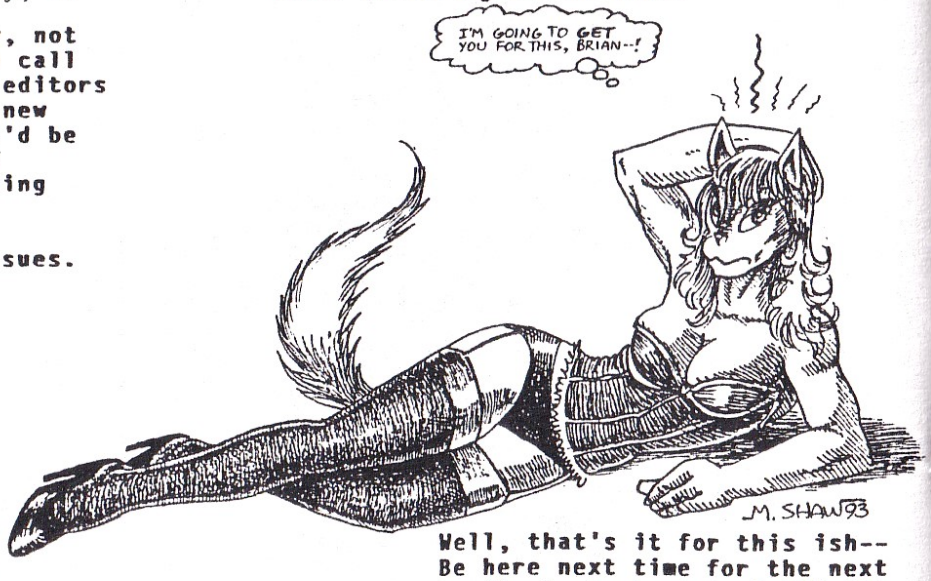
Enclosed is the submissions guide for my zine, THE BUNNY PAGES-- you said you might be able to contribute to issue #2. I hope you can join us, as I'd love to see what you can do on a cheesecake-style pin-up. So far, contributors to the second issue will be Delfin Barral Kjartan Arnorsson, Dennis Stahl, Dean L. Norton, Mercy Van Vlack, Juan Alfonso, Sue Mills, Scott Alston, and Jim Groat (sorry, can't resist name dropping).

Anyway, let me know what issues you have available and if you think you'll be able to contribute.

See ya,

Brian Yelverton
P.O. Box 8140
Salem, MA 01971

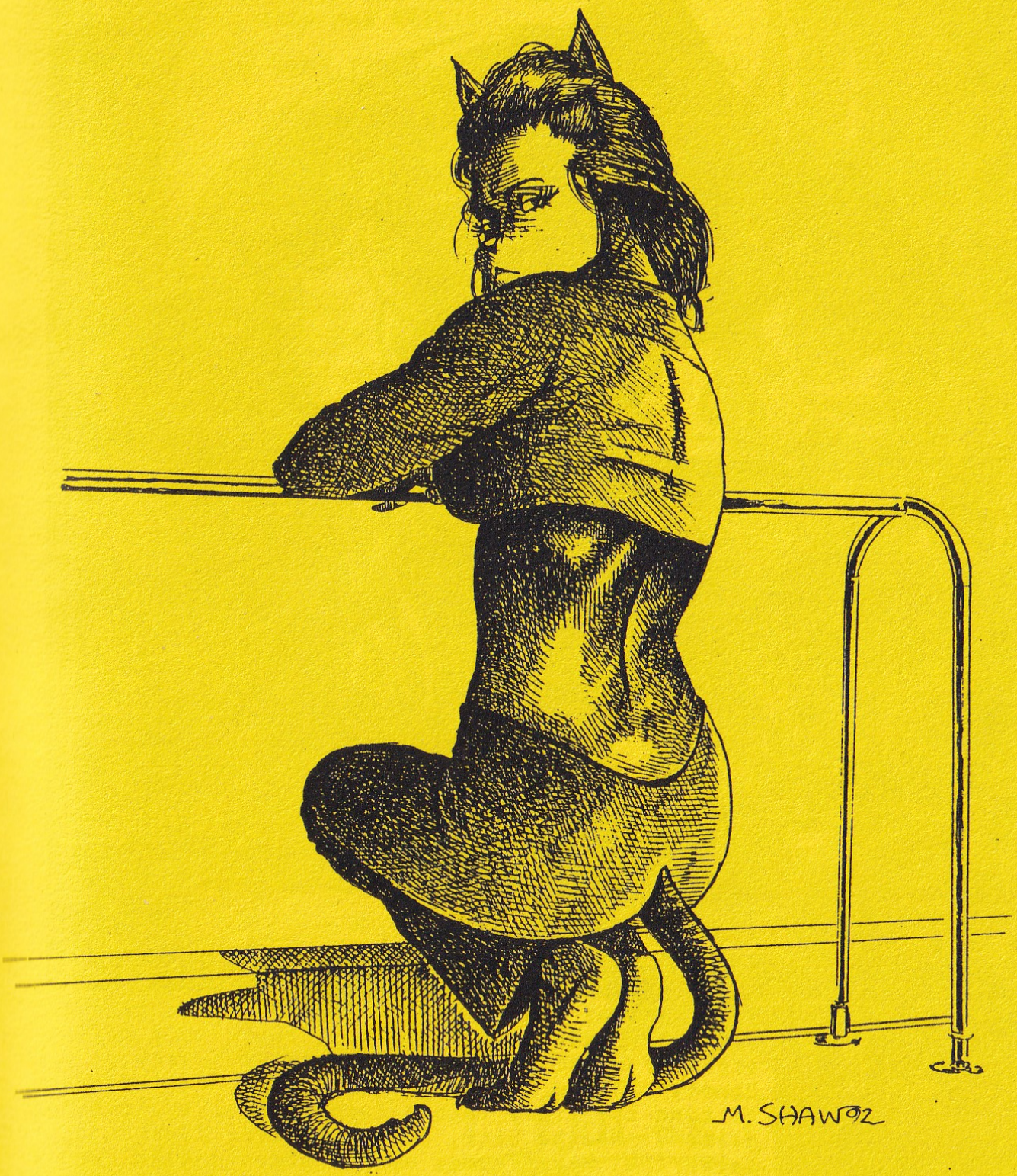
Yes, indeedy-doody, I think I can contribute to your worthy endeavor Brian. I've also included your address so anyone else who wants to get a copy of THE BUNNY PAGES could write you and get it. #1 was $6.00, and featured a bevy of scantily clad furry babes by pro and amateur artists--schwing!! Below is one of the sultry sirens I sent Brian for issue #2 (or 3, or 4)... Hot diggity dog! Sometimes drawering can be fun!!

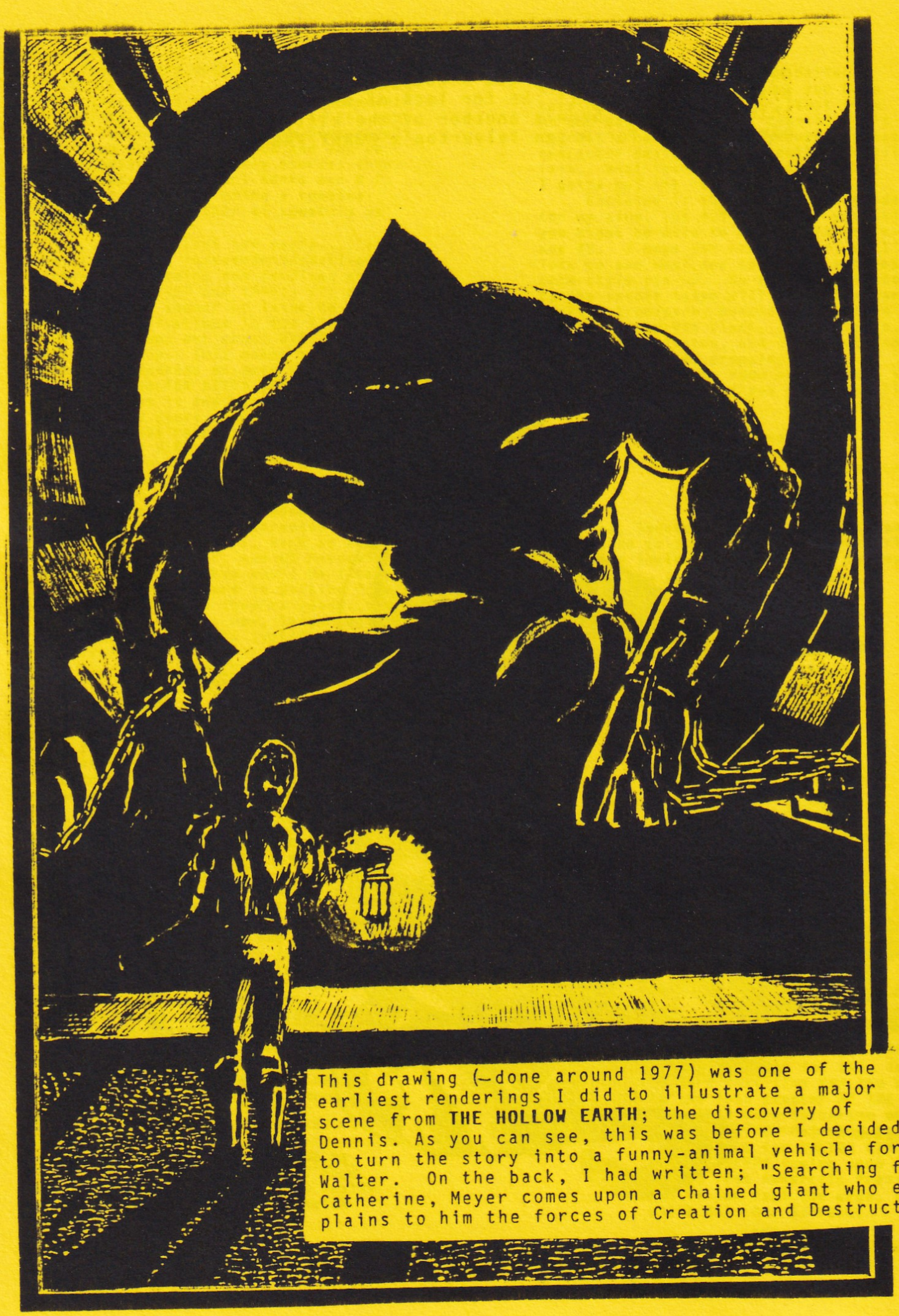


Well, that's it for this ish-- Be here next time for the next to the last chapter of THE HOLLOW EARTH when Catherine must decide what to do! And be on the lookout for WALTER KITTY OF THE SSCPPA coming soon (hopefully) from Antarctic Press. And if you feel the urge, please WRITE US! Our Address:

**AWK Comics
2701 Penny Ln.#219
Austin, Tx 78757**

OOPS! Once again I've got a couple of blank pages to fill! So for lack of anything prepared, here's another of the kitty-girls I drew for Brian Yelverton's **BUNNY PAGES.**





This drawing (—done around 1977) was one of the earliest renderings I did to illustrate a major scene from **THE HOLLOW EARTH**; the discovery of Dennis. As you can see, this was before I decided to turn the story into a funny-animal vehicle for Walter. On the back, I had written; "Searching for Catherine, Meyer comes upon a chained giant who explains to him the forces of Creation and Destruction.

NEXT ISSUE:

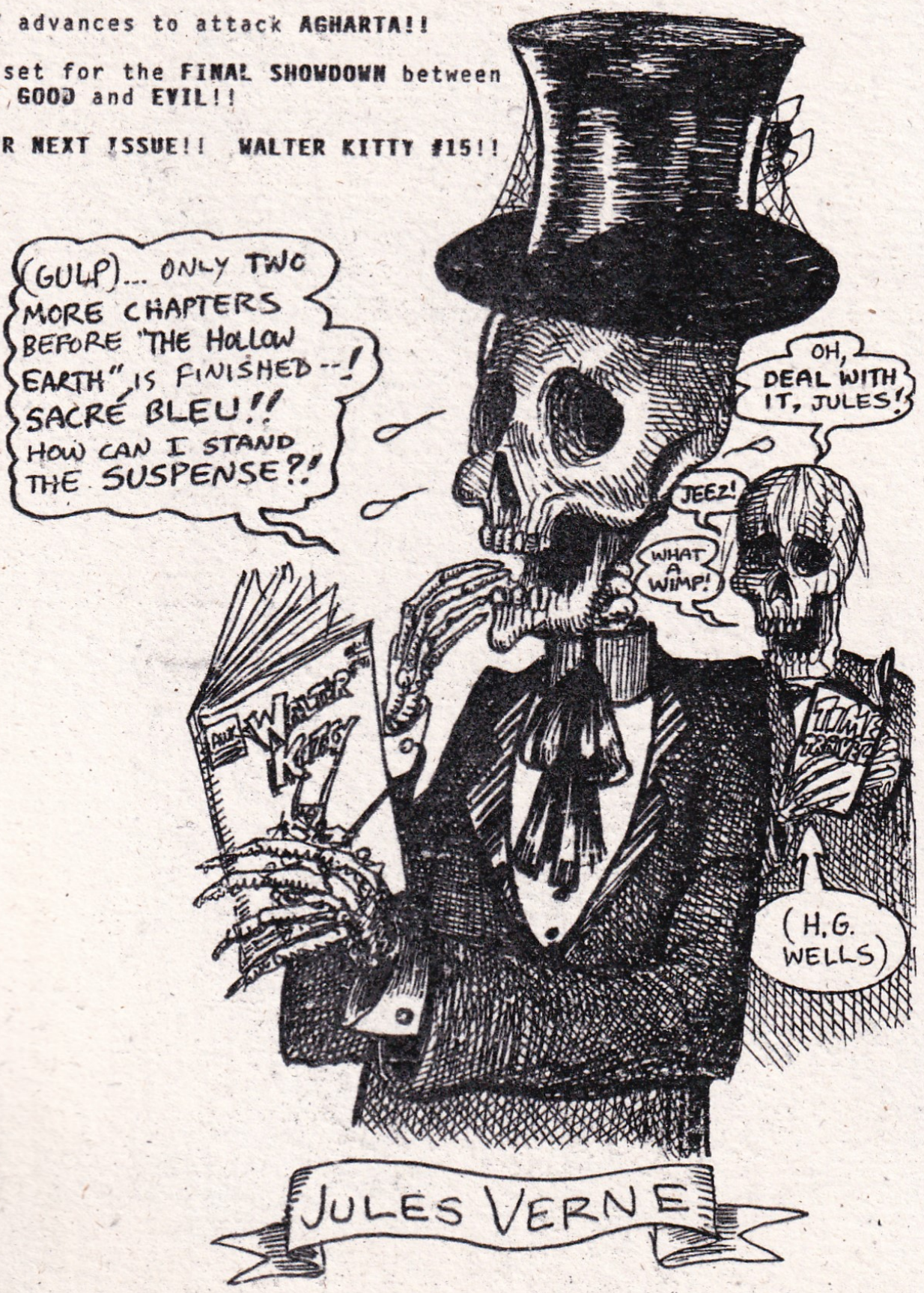
In PART ELEVEN of **THE HOLLOW EARTH...**

ZANOKANON has complete control of **THE SOURCE!!**

His **BOOT ARMY** advances to attack **AGHARTA!!**

The stage is set for the **FINAL SHOWDOWN** between the forces of **GOOD** and **EVIL!!**

DON'T MISS OUR NEXT ISSUE!! WALTER KITTY #15!! AIEEEEEEEE!!!



M.SHAW92